BIBLE GALLERY

ILLUSTRATED BY

GUSTAVE DORÉ

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GUSTAVE DORÉ

THE

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ILLUSTRATED

BY

GUSTAVE DORÉ,

WITH MEMOIR OF DORÉ AND DESCRIPTIVE LETTER-PRESS

BY

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

For centuries the Scriptures have furnished the favorite themes for artists. Were the famous galleries of Europe deprived of the works which have been suggested by the Old Testament and the New, they would lose at least one-half of their masterpieces. The great French painter and designer, Gustave Doré, after illustrating various secular works, devoted his talent to the sacred volume. In this he displayed great power and richness of imagination and much vigor of conception, united with a wonderful facility and swiftness of execution. The illustrations of the Bible added greatly to his celebrity.

The entire work, in two folio volumes, is too large and costly for general circulation. The publishers, therefore, have issued in this volume a selection of one hundred of the choicest pictures, and these are accompanied by a descriptive narrative intended to furnish all the information needed for the proper understanding of the persons or incidents portrayed. The book being furnished at a moderate price, will, it is hoped, find its way into many homes, and prove a useful companion to God's most holy Word.

T. W. C.

GUSTAVE DORÉ.

PAUL GUSTAVE DORÉ was born at Strasburg on the 6th of January, 1833. His father was a civil engineer, and was sent, while the future painter was still a child, to Bourg, the capital of the ancient province of La Bresse, and now *chef-lieu* of the department of the Ain. The infancy of Doré was therefore, René Delorme tells us, under the influence of two striking natural objects, viz., the romantic hills of the Vosges and the grander mountains of the Alps. But he forgets the wonderfully impressive architectural features both of Strasburg and of Bourg.

It is not known when Doré learned to draw, and he himself is equally ignorant on the subject; but before he was eight years of age he could use his pencil with ease, and when only eleven he designed two pictures, showing at once facility and humor. The one had for its subject the inauguration of David's statue of Bichat, the eminent anatomist, and the other represented a boy's slide on the slope of the walk called the Bastion. He entered the Lycée, or grammar-school of Bourg, preceded by his reputation of draughtsman, and his masters had the sense not to thwart his vocation. They allowed him to draw in his copy-books, and place pictorial annotations on the margins of his grammar. Once, in a composition of verse—according to Delorme, who tells the story—Doré gave the professor, by way of translation, a drawing representing with rigorous exactitude the murder of Clitus. While solecisms abounded in the copies of his little comrades, Doré had alone thoroughly understood and rendered with correctness the scene described by the historian; and M. Grandmottet, the professor, did not hesitate to give Gustave the first place.

To encourage the boy to work, his father promised to take him to Paris, provided he obtained prizes at the end of his quarter. The boy received his laurels and departed, taking in his box sundry portfolios. As soon as he descended at the hotel, he escaped and presented himself all alone to the editor of the *Journal pour Rire*, whose office was situated in the Place de la Bourse. Judge of the surprise of Philippon, exclaims Delorme, when the little schoolboy showed him a remarkable set of drawings, among which was a series of "The Labors of Hercules." "Who did this?" "'Twas I, sir." Very surprised, the editor talked with the little fellow, who told him how he had seen a number of the *Journal pour Rire* at Bourg, and how he had escaped from the hotel to come and present himself. He confided also to him his great desire to stay in Paris, and study drawing and become an artist, and he feared that he would be taken back to Bourg, because his father found education too expensive in the schools of Paris.

Philippon was an excellent man, and listened attentively to the little scholar, and then said to him, "Leave me your drawings, return to your parents, who are no doubt anxious, and ask your father to come and see me. I believe all you desire could be realized."

An hour afterwards Philippon declared to the father of Doré that the vocation of the child appeared really extraordinary—that on no account must he leave the precincts of the Museum of the Louvre; and, that things might be made easy and pleasant, he would publish "The Labors of Hercules," assuring him at the same time that the price of these drawings, and those that Gustave Doré could make, would suffice amply to pay for his schooling at the Charlemagne.

This incident occurred in the autumn of 1847, when the boy was about fourteen, and finally led to his remaining in Paris. He stayed with a friend of his mother, Madame Hérouville, who lived in the Rue St. Paul, two steps from the college.

Besides such spontaneous work as from time to time rejoiced the eyes of his appreciative professors, the pencil of Doré during those student days was regularly employed by his friend, M. Philippon, in producing illustrations for *La Caricature* and the *Journal pour Rire*. These and his subsequent designs to Balzac's "Contes Drôlatiques," helped much to make his name familiar in the art-world, and to lay the foundation of his great reputation.

In the meantime came the days of June, 1848, and the impressionable Doré, taking up his post in the Street of St. Paul, assisted at the insurrection of the Faubourg Saint Antoine. What drew him to this volcanic quarter, however, with its turbulent inhabitants, its improvised barricades, shootings and massacres, was not politics, which have little significance for him, but the terrible spectacle of contending bodies of men animated by the deadliest passion. Here, indeed, was a school for studying the live model, both singly and in groups. The play of muscle, whether in grimy face or bared arm, was to be seen under almost every conceivable attitude; and while the war of revolution went on, Doré was swift to take advantage with his pencil of its ever-varying phase, and to lay up for future artistic use the knowledge of how humanity conducted itself when loosened from all conventional restraints and thrown back on the primeval instincts of strife, bloodshed, and self-preservation. It was doubtless under such circumstances that his marvelous faculty for tumultuous grouping was first quickened into active exercise.

From 1848 to 1852 Doré, according to Delorme, studied with much assiduity and courage whatever belonged to the technique of painting,

and in 1853 or 1854 he exhibited for the first time two pictures, viz., "The Family of the Mountebanks," and "The Thriving Child and the Sickly Child." The first was a picturesque composition. The second had for subject the meeting of two mothers, one of whom leads triumphantly a little one with fresh, round, rosy cheeks, and the other carries in her arms a poor, thin, puling infant. The touch of nature in the picture lies in the mournful look of envy which the second mother throws at the first.

At the Universal Exhibition of 1855 Doré was represented by three pictures—"La Bataille de l'Alma," "Le Soir," and "La Prairie." He would have exhibited a fourth, "Riccio," but there was no room for it. Of this work both Théophile Gantier and Edmond About had a high opinion, and said at the time that it would have been an undoubted success had it been shown. They prophesied of him great things for the future, and time has placed its *imprimatur* on every word they wrote.

In 1856 the English public was introduced to a version of the old French romance of "Jaufry the Knight and the Fair Brunissende: a Tale of the Times of King Arthur," to which Doré had contributed twenty pictures as full of the glamour of romance as the text of his original; and the folio publication of "The Wandering Jew," brought out the following year, was still more imaginative, weird-like, and startling. But the full height of his fame as an illustrator was not reached till the publication of his illustrations to Dante's "Inferno," which appeared in Paris in 1861, and were re-issued in this country by Messrs. Cassell, Petter and Galpin in 1866. French and English art-lovers became familiar with the "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso," issued by the same publishers in 1868. "The number of Dante designs," says Mr. Ollier, "is over 136—an astonishing number, considering their excellence, their variety, the extraordinary height and range of their conceptions, and the pictorial elaboration of their handling."

But, strange to say—and the fact has never been noticed by any of his biographers—the "Inferno," the first of this truly magnificent and original series, was declined by one of the most eminent firms in Paris. When Doré took his drawings to the publisher, and proposed his undertaking the publication of the work, he was assured with a smile of well-bred commiseration that there was not the slightest chance of its proving profitable. M. Doré, however, was not to be deterred from his purpose, and proposed to have the work published at his own risk. In vain the publisher, as a friend, tried to dissuade him from such an undertaking, assuring him that he was certain to lose his money—that there would be no demand for Dante with such large designs. His arguments were all in vain. Doré, like all great men, had a belief in himself. The book was published, took the world by storm, and the edition was exhausted in a few days. The "Inferno" contained seventy-six drawings, and the "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso" sixty.

On the 15th of August, 1861, Gustave Doré was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor; and two years afterwards, in 1863, he produced his "Don Quixote." Its 370 drawings so enhanced the text of Cervantes that, in referring to this edition, the glory of the great Spaniard is merged in that of the Frenchman, and we invariably say, "Doré's Don Quixote."

At the request of Messrs. Hachette and Co., the publishers of the works just enumerated, he produced forty-four works for Chateaubriand's "Atala" forty-eight large compositions and 250 heads of pages for the Fables of La Fontaine, 300 engravings illustrating Spain, 150 doing a like service for London, forty designs for Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and thirty-six for Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." To the illustration of these multitudinous subjects he brought a vividness and fecundity of imagination, a readiness and spontaneity of pencil, unequaled in the whole history of art.

And yet these by no means represent all that Doré has done. In 1866 appeared the Holy Bible, with nearly 250 illustrations, which has been fitly described as "the culminating and vastest work of the artist's life as a work of illustration." The production of these engravings occupied M. Doré no less a period than four years, and the cost of drawing and engraving alone amounted to more than $75,000. In the same year was completed the edition of Milton, executed expressly for Messrs. Cassell, Petter and Galpin. Various other works have also been produced since, illustrating writings of standard authors, both English and French. He does not know himself how many designs he has made in his lifetime. Several years ago a collector in Paris, who was eagerly seizing all he could get of his published sketches, had then ascertained that there were over 20,000 in existence.

Turning to Doré's paintings, captious critics, because his intellect is so creative and his hand so ready, are apt to speak of them as transient affairs that had been dashed off without either thought or care. He very reasonably complains that in this respect people do him an injustice. "Do they think," he will say, "that I can paint such subjects as 'Christ Leaving the Prætorium,' 'The Night of the Crucifixion,' the 'Francesca da Rimini,' or any of my pictures, without much conscientious labor? Let them try to make a *mere outline* on a large canvas themselves, and they will then have some idea of what the *painting* of such canvases means."

Those, on the contrary, who know Doré are aware that he is a man of the most unflagging mental activity, and regards *life* and *work* as great realities, and no one was ever more vividly impressed with the force of what Hippocrates said about life being short and art long than Doré. When the lighter hours of relaxation and recreation are over—and he is as full of animal spirits as a boy—he will often resume his work at his drawings and sketches, and labor far into the early morning. His patience and fastidiousness are remarkable. His grand etching of "The Neophyte," for example—which, by the way, is among the largest plates in existence, and will one day be prized as one

of the rare things in art—was the source of endless trouble. He made *eleven* etchings of this subject before he was satisfied with the twelfth! His friends thought it mere wanton fastidiousness to destroy plate after plate, especially as many of them were very successful; but Doré thought no labor too great to satisfy himself.

The inventive faculty of Doré is simply unrivaled, and his pencil in its creative character is most assuredly the first in Europe. Like all geniuses worthy of the name, he is many-sided, and in his case the word *artist* must be applied in its broadest sense. Years before etching had become the fashionable rage it is, Doré had produced his famous plate of "Rossini, taken after Death," so vigorous, yet withal so tender and beautiful, that it has rarely been equaled. To the plate of his "Neophyte," which is perhaps the finest piece of color and characterization Doré ever painted, we have already alluded.

In wood-engraving he has raised up quite a school in Paris. He has the entire control over these gentlemen—in fact, he employs them. They say that, when they please him, no man is kinder or more liberal than he; but he rejects and destroys all work that does not satisfy him, and to the grief of his soul the engraver has to commence his labor over again.

Again, as a sculptor, Doré does more than bid fair for fame. By such works as his plaster group of "Fate and Love" in the *Salon* of 1877, his "La Gloire" of 1878, and his "L'Effroi" of 1879, he has already achieved it. Indeed his "La Gloire"—the second group of sculpture he ever executed—occupied the place of honor in the *Salon* of 1878; for it was the most poetical and most touching group of the year. A youth personifying Genius or Glory is being stabbed to the heart by Fame, who hides her dagger in the laurels with which she has wreathed him. There is an eternal and terrible truth in this manner of setting forth the price that has to be paid for "the look of Fame."

Doré is, moreover, an amateur musician. He was, as we have seen, the intimate friend of Rossini, but he is none the less an admirer of the music of Beethoven; he sings well, plays well on the violin and piano, and in all his social qualities and accomplishments, from talking to conjuring, he is simply charming; and one can easily imagine how his great studio—said, indeed, to be the largest in Paris—and his musical *soirées* are the frequent haunt of the rank and fashion and intellect of the age. He was a favorite with Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugénie, and on more than one occasion designed and directed what in Ben Jonson's time would have been called their masques and revels.

In stature Doré is rather under than over the middle height; but then he is broad-shouldered and firmly knit. His complexion is fresh and fair, his eyes dark, quick, and penetrating. There is a peculiar upward and defiant pose about the air and set of his massive head. Though no stranger to the love of laughter and the joys of life, the mirthful mood is by no means always present. When it does come it is frequently with a bound and a start, and is likely to be succeeded as suddenly with thoughts serious and grave. Of the two moods, however, the general mental, and especially physical, conformation of the man shows a predisposition towards the bright and active in life.

Doré several times attempted the ascent of the Matterhorn, and on one occasion he climbed outside to the summit of Rouen (or, according to some authorities, of Strasburg) Cathedral. One with activities of this kind is scarcely likely to suffer from ennui or hypochondria. The multitudinous moral and intellectual facets of which the man is formed enable him to reflect and reproduce not only all kinds and conditions of men, but all manner of moods and fashions and times, from the gross animalism and vulgar wants of Sancho Panza to the weird sorrows of the Wandering Jew. La Fontaine and Dante, Rabelais and Milton, all that is glorious in legend, tender in poetry, or sublime in Holy Writ, all that is lovely in the field or awe-impressing in the lightning-scathed crag, come readily to his call, and whatever drawbacks the hypercritical may attach to the practice of the artist, he still remains the most universal, if not the greatest, pictorial expresser the world has yet seen.

Gustave Doré had to some extent passed out of the blaze of public fame during the last few years of his life. He did less in the way of book-illustration, and in these days it is book-illustration, rather than picture-painting, which gives an artist the greatest notoriety. After a while, his health failed, and he died at Pau on the 23d of January, 1883, at the early age of fifty-one.

In his own line he has left no equal, and indeed no successor.

THE EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN.

THE illustration represents what is stated in Genesis iii. 24: "So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This pathetic scene has often attracted the pencil of the artist. Its mournful contrast with all that preceded is enough to touch any heart. The drama of exile has often been repeated in the world's history, but never so sadly as in the experience of the first pair, when

> "They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow
> Through Eden took their solitary way."

But the interest of the thoughtful in the matter is far more than mere sentiment. The expulsion from the garden signalizes the great fact in the history of mankind, that the race is not what it was once. The traditions of all nations point back to a period when men were better than they now are. Human depravity, so far from being a mere dogma, the invention of theologians, is a spontaneous and universal conviction. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, moralists like Cicero and Seneca, historians like Tacitus, all bear witness to it, as does every religion that ever appeared on the face of the earth. But when we seek for the cause of this wide-spread and deep-seated evil, there is no clear and intelligible answer save in the record of Moses. Man was not made a sinner, but, on the contrary, in his Maker's image. Had he continued to retain that image, none of the long train of ills which afflict the world would have appeared. But he failed and fell, and thus was introduced the deadly virus which has reached every member of the race. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In the sad picture of Adam and Eve fleeing in shame and terror from their holy home, each of their descendants sees the cause and the type of his own exile from the favor and fellowship of God.

But the same volume which discloses to us the expulsion from the primeval garden, also reveals the way of return. Eden has disappeared forever, but its place is taken by a better region where the curse never comes, and where they that enter go no more out forever. For it is written (Rev. ii. 7), "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

THE EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN.

THE MURDER OF ABEL.

GENESIS IV. 1–15.

THE sad truth set forth in the preceding page is here illustrated in the most striking way. Alienation from God is always followed by mutual estrangement. According to the record given in Genesis, when the two brothers, Cain and Abel, appeared before the Lord for worship, the latter was accepted, the former not,—the one coming as a sinner with a bloody sacrifice, which pointed to the great truth of expiation, the other with an unbloody offering, which contained no suggestion of unworthiness or the need of pardon. Cain became angry at his ill-success, and even the gracious expostulation of his Maker made no impression upon his mind. On the contrary, he went from bad to worse. Envy led to hatred, and hatred to obduracy before God, and the issue was the shedding of a brother's blood. "Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him." We are not left in doubt as to the origin of this fratricide The Apostle John in his First Epistle (iii. 12) says: "Cain was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

The artist has chosen to represent that point of time when the murderer, having accomplished his fell purpose, turns to look upon the result in the lifeless form prostrate before him. His attitude and his countenance betray the incipient remorse which is to have no end. There is no need to portray him, as Ary Scheffer has done, wandering on a desert path with Nemesis hovering over him in the shape of an angel with a drawn sword. Nemesis is in his breast. He may, when brought to account, deny that he has knowledge of his brother, but no such denial can be made to the voice within. And what, what shall wash out the stain of a brother's blood?

Well does the writer of the last Epistle in the New Testament (Jude i. verse 1) describe aggravated sinners of his time as those "who have gone in the way of Cain." They imitate the first murderer, him who set the evil example of yielding to pride, impenitence, envy, hatred, and malice, until at last he defiled the earth with innocent blood. Yet even for such there is hope if they repent and believe. For there is a blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. The latter cried out for retribution, the former testifies of expiation.

THE MURDER OF ABEL.

THE DELUGE.

GENESIS VII.

THE last picture set forth the deplorable consequences of the Fall as shown in the family of Adam: this one exhibits those evil results on a far wider scale. The whole earth became exceedingly wicked, and crimes of violence abounded. So far did this depravity extend that all flesh became ripe for destruction, and unless God interfered the human family would utterly perish in its own corruption. To guard against such a result the Lord sent a visitation which, terrible as it was, yet had a merciful side, since it preserved a remnant, and so saved the race. This was the Flood, which has sometimes been considered as strictly universal. But the language of Scripture, as explained by the usage of subsequent writers, does not require us to hold more than that the judgment was not local but general, and extended far enough to sweep away all the contemporaries of Noah. That such a general deluge did occur, is one of the best established facts of history. Indeed no supernatural event recorded in the Bible is sustained by such varied and abundant outside evidence as this. The tradition of such an occurrence is found everywhere, not only among Babylonians, Persians, Hindoos, Chinese, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, but all over the Western Continent, among Mexicans, Peruvians, and the isles of the Pacific, and almost always with the ethical idea that it was a judgment upon a sinful race. Within a few years a fresh confirmation has been gained from some Assyrian clay tablets in the British Museum, the translation of which presents a vivid narrative of a flood and an ark. It is quite impossible that a tradition so wide-spread should have no historical foundation.

The picture before us gives a specimen of the many sad tragedies which must have occurred at this awful period. Rational and irrational beings would alike seek some refuge from the roaring flood, and all antipathies be swallowed up in the one effort for self-preservation. Ample warning was given of the impending stroke, but none regarded it, and all outside the ark were taken by surprise. Old and young, fathers and mothers, were alike involved in the overwhelming catastrophe.

THE DELUGE.

NOAH CURSING HAM.

GENESIS IX.

The illustrations of human depravity still continue. Even in the family so remarkably preserved from the deluge which engulfed a race, there crops out the irrepressible tendency to go astray. Noah, the preacher of righteousness, the one faithful man of his generation, deviated so far as to become the victim of a base bodily appetite. The second head of the race was so overcome by drink as to make unconsciously a shameful exposure of his person, and this gave occasion to an equally shameful exhibition of filial irreverence on the part of his youngest son. For Ham, who first witnessed the unseemly sight, instead of covering it, related it apparently with pleasure to his brothers. They, on the contrary, with reverential modesty hid from sight their father's disgrace. This circumstance gave occasion to the prophetic utterance set forth in the illustration.

The words of Noah have sometimes been profanely described as the mere expression of a drunken man's wrath. So far from that, they are a divine forecasting of the future, and one abundantly justified by the records of history. The Spirit of God took occasion, from this circumstance, to set forth, in broad outline, the destiny of the three great streams of Noah's posterity. The true religion was first given to and continued in the children of Shem, but afterwards Japhet was enlarged and entered into the tents of Shem, sharing his blessings. The descendants of Ham, on the other hand—Canaanites, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Egyptians, and others—were all subjected to the yoke, and sooner or later became servants to their brethren.

The curse of Ham, so graphically depicted in Noah's uplifted arm and frowning countenance, was pronounced not upon the original culprit, but upon Canaan; partly, no doubt, because he was walking in the steps of his father's impiety and sin, but chiefly because it was the people directly derived from him, and bearing his name, who should in the future become the hereditary foes of the covenant people. And thus Israel, when engaged in the struggle for the promised land, would be encouraged by recalling the primeval prophecy that their foe should be made a servant of servants.

NOAH CURSING HAM.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

THE eleventh chapter of Genesis informs us of a new development of human pride. Men, having lost the true unity of the race in its common attachment to the one God and Father of all, sought another in a haughty and splendid material empire. To keep themselves together and make themselves a name, they would build a walled and fortified city, with a citadel which lifted its head to the clouds. The vast and imposing structures, of which remains are still found in the Babylonian plain, strikingly corroborate the account given by Moses. The building outlined in the illustration is fashioned after what is known to have been the usual type of public edifices in the regions of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and is therefore more than a mere fancy sketch.

The means which God employed to check the impious efforts of the tower-builders was to confound their speech. How this was done we are not informed, whether by an inward or an outward process, by altering the associations of words with things or by producing differences of pronunciation and dialect. Nor have we any means of solving the problem. The fact itself is certain. That God was able to effect it, no one can deny. That he did do it, his own word declares. The race was torn apart as it could have been in no other way. A sudden end came to all plans of building up one great permanent center of social and political unity in opposition to God.

The statements of Genesis are wonderfully confirmed by modern philology. The many hundreds of inflected languages are, by general consent, resolved into three great families, commonly called Semitic, Aryan, and Turanian. Yet, widely as these three stocks differ, Prof. Max Muller says that nothing compels us to believe that they had separate independent beginnings either for the material or the formal elements of their speech. Other eminent scholars state the same thing positively, and insist that all the facts point directly to one common source of all the existing varieties of language.

A pleasant counterpart to the sad scene of alienation and division in the picture before us, showing how men became strangers and enemies to each other, is seen in the miraculous effusion at Pentecost, enabling the disciples to speak all the various languages used from Parthia to Rome. Christianity practically repeals the curse of Babel by causing the Gospel to be preached to every nation and kindred and tongue and people.

THE TOWER OF BABEL

ABRAHAM ENTERTAINS THREE STRANGERS.

GENESIS XVIII.

THE picture represents the opening scene of one of the most remarkable of the many appearances which God made to Abraham. It was for the purpose of confirming afresh to him the promise that Sarah should bear a son in her old age, and also of informing him beforehand of the impending doom of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The artist has misconceived the narrative in representing Abraham's visitors as angels with wings. It is true that they were angels, and one of them was the Angel of the Covenant, *i. e.*, the Lord himself; but they did not so appear in the first instance. They were in human form, having assumed bodies for the occasion. They suddenly appeared before Abraham, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He ran to meet them, offering the hospitality suited to the occasion, and thus, as we are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 2), "entertained angels unawares." In the course of the interview that followed, Sarah's unbelief of the promise was effectually rebuked and apparently overcome. Then the men set forth in the direction of the cities of the plain, and Abraham accompanied them some distance on their way. At a certain point, said by tradition to be *Kaphar Baruka*, from which one can see the Dead Sea through a ravine, the party stopped, and the Lord revealed to Abraham his awful purpose respecting Sodom and Gomorrah. Then the two angels proceeded on their mission toward Sodom, while the Lord remained to hear what Abraham had to say. This was an humble but importunate prayer in behalf of the doomed cities: on one hand displaying the generous and spiritual character of the heir of the promises, and on the other furnishing a model of intercession to all succeeding ages. It is noteworthy that Abraham left off asking before God left off conceding.

To entertain angels, much more the Angel of the Lord, is indeed a great privilege, and seems in character for such an eminent believer as the father of the faithful. Yet the Lord Jesus more than once declared that any act of kindness done to his people because they are his people, is done to himself, and will be so recognized and proclaimed in the great day. This being so, humble modern believers may have as great an honor as Abraham himself.

ABRAHAM ENTERTAINS THREE STRANGERS.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.

GENESIS XIX.

THE two angels who, according to the preceding narrative, left Abraham and went toward Sodom, arrived there in the evening, and were hospitably received by Lot. They warned him of their dreadful errand to destroy the city, and urged him to depart with all speed: but, whether his faith was feeble, or his mind warped by the indifference of his sons-in-law who mocked at the warning, he lingered until at last, with friendly violence, the angels seized him and brought him forth without the city. Even then he entreated that Zoar might be spared, and he allowed to take refuge there. His request was granted, and the picture represents him as pressing forward with a daughter on either arm, and fear and alarm expressed on every feature of his countenance.

As soon as he entered Zoar the dreadful destruction commenced. The Lord rained fire and brimstone out of heaven. Along with this tremendous storm there appears to have been a subsidence of the ground, so that the waters of the upper lake flowed in upon the former fertile and populous plain, and formed what is now the southern portion of the Dead Sea. Into this pool of burning bitumen and seething waters the guilty cities sank forever. No language can depict the horror of that doom—so sudden, so complete, so overwhelming; flames above, flames beneath, flames all around; men, women, children, domestic animals, houses, treasures, and even the very soil itself, swallowed up by the fiery visitation. Of all that dense population, at sunrise nothing was seen but dense clouds of smoke, like the smoke of a furnace.

But the figure standing alone in the picture presents the most pitiable victim of the calamity. This was Lot's nearest relative, his wife. An unwilling follower of the rescuing angels, she, in direct violation of an express injunction, looked back, as if her heart still clung to the unclean things of Sodom, and, so looking, was lost. "The dashing spray of the salt, sulphurous rain seems to have suffocated her, and then incrusted her whole body." Her doom was worse than that of the cities, for she had begun to flee, and was almost in safety when the storm struck her. It was like a ship going down in sight of port. Hence the injunction of our Saviour, "Remember Lot's wife." Almost saved is not saved.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM

THE EXPULSION OF HAGAR.

The incident is related in the twenty-first chapter of Genesis. The weaning of Isaac was celebrated by a feast, at which the son of Hagar, now a lad of fifteen years of age, derided the infant heir of the promise. Sarah was grieved at the mockery, and demanded that both mother and son should be cast out. At first Abraham demurred, but afterwards, at the divine command, yielded his personal preferences, and the bondwoman, with her child, was sent away. It is this sad dismissal that the artist represents with spirit and effectiveness. But the water which Hagar received was probably not in an earthen jar, as shown in the picture, but in a kid-skin, as is usual in the East.

At first sight this seems a very harsh and inexcusable proceeding. But it is to be remembered that the wilderness into which Hagar was sent to wander was not a desert, but simply a region which, though not profitable for cultivation, was, to a large extent, well suited for pasture; and to be sent thither was, by no means, to be consigned to destitution and death. Besides, Abraham had a divine assurance that no harm should come to the lad. "And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed." He therefore could rely upon that word which never yet had failed him, that the expulsion would turn out for Ishmael's good, as, indeed, we know was the case. But it was necessary, for the peace of the household, that the separation should be made, and that thus should be given, ages in advance, a living illustration of the inherent incompatibility between the spirit of bondage and the spirit of liberty. (See Galatians iv. 22–31.) This little incident of patriarchal life represented in miniature the workings of God's providence, afterward to be exhibited in grander proportions in the history of the Christian Church. The bondwoman typified the servile spirit of mere legalism; the freewoman the blessed Gospel, with its largeness and liberty; and the mockery of Ishmael prefigured the waywardness and sharpness of those who gloried in the letter of the law against those who trusted only in the promise. The casting out of Hagar, severe as it seemed to be, was only an assurance that the slavish, task-work view of a religious life should yield to the joyous, filial spirit which is the natural product of grace.

THE EXPULSION OF HAGAR.

HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS.

The experience of Hagar, when first sent forth into the desert, was anything but encouraging. As she wandered about, her supply of water became exhausted, and her boy seemed like to die with thirst. Despairing of relief, she led him to a sheltering bush, and then sat down a bow-shot off, that she might not see his dying struggles. The situation was deeply affecting, and has often attracted the pencil of the artist. The illustration here given is not faithful to the details of the Scripture narrative, but it represents well the maternal anguish which is its most conspicuous feature. The lad may have thought only of his own sad fate, but Hagar, no doubt, wept more for her son than herself. A mother's love is perhaps the strongest passion of which our nature is capable; and though it was Ishmael's profane mockery of his infant brother that caused the expulsion from the parental home, and the consequent suffering, Hagar thought only of the child's wretched condition, and wept bitterly. Nor may we doubt, although nothing is said upon the point, that she resorted to the only resource left when human help proves vain, and prayed to Abraham's God. In such circumstances prayer is an instinct, often so strong as to overpower the convictions and habits of a lifetime.

It is a pleasing relief to the sadness of the lonely scene to know that timely relief was afforded. The unbecoming conduct of mother and child was sufficiently rebuked by what they had endured, and the angel of God appeared with succor just when the case seemed hopeless. A supply of water was furnished, and cheering assurances were given, not only as to the preservation of the lad's life, but also as to the fulfillment of former promises (Genesis xvi. 10), that from him should spring a posterity that could not be numbered for multitude.

HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS.

THE TRIAL OF THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM.

GENESIS XXII.

We are here confronted with an act of faith which has never been surpassed in any age or land. Abraham was commanded to offer a human sacrifice—a thing abhorrent to nature and reason, afterward repeatedly forbidden by God in his word, and practiced only by debased heathen in agonies of despair. What made it worse, in this case, was the character of the victim. "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest." It was sad for Abraham to lose this son; sadder to lose him by violence; saddest of all to be himself the executioner. Isaac was endeared to his father not only by all possible natural ties, but also in a peculiar manner as the heir of the promise. Through him alone was Abraham to obtain the covenanted blessing: the possession of the land, an innumerable seed, and a world-wide spiritual blessing. Thus command and promise come in deadly conflict. If Abraham obeys the command he frustrates the promise; if he holds fast the promise by sparing his son, he disobeys the command. A more painful situation can hardly be conceived.

Yet the patriarch's faith rose up to the level of the crisis. It did not become him to debate with his Maker. He felt, as the greatest of his descendants said, ages afterward, "Let God be true, but every man a liar." His obedience was prompt and decisive. He did not confer with flesh and blood. He did not tell Sarah, lest a mother's heart should overflow, and, with a torrent of tears, seek to stay his hand. Nor did he even tell Isaac, until the disclosure became necessary. He took the three days' journey, reached the appointed spot, made the needful preparations, and stood, with uplifted arm, to inflict the fatal stroke. His heart trembled, but not his hand.

What lay at the bottom of this inflexible course? Was it coldness of heart, lack of natural affection, or the fever of an inflamed conscience seeking a costly expiation? No; but an intelligent and mighty faith. Abraham believed in God as the Judge of all the earth, and therefore absolutely just and right. Unable to see any reason for a command which wrung his heart, he believed that there was a reason. Unable to see how Isaac, if slain, could become the progenitor of countless millions, he yet believed that it would come to pass. It was sheer strength of faith that upheld him. So we are assured in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 17–19): "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead."

No wonder that the man who so believed was called "the friend of God," and no wonder that his faith was gloriously vindicated by the intervention of the Angel of the Lord.

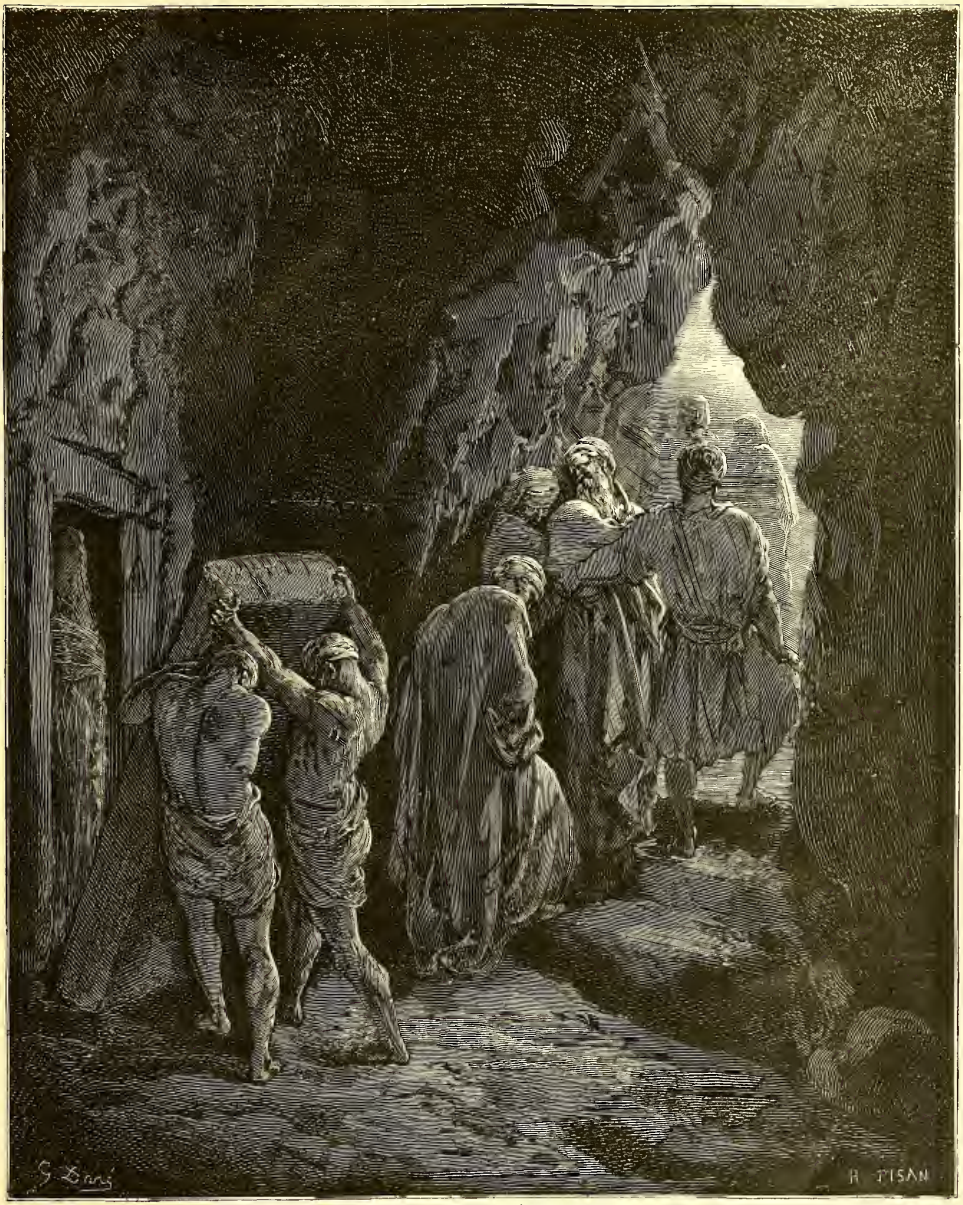
THE TRIAL OF THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM.

THE BURIAL OF SARAH.

GENESIS XXIII.

One of the few sites in Palestine about which there is no dispute, is the cave of Machpelah, at Hebron. Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan traditions all unite in recognizing this as the oldest known burial-place in the world, the spot where the three patriarchs, with their wives (save Rachel, who was buried near Bethlehem), sleep till the resurrection. The mosque over the cave was most jealously closed against all but Moslems until 1862, when the Prince of Wales was admitted; but neither he, nor any subsequent visitor, was allowed to enter the cave itself. The first occupant of the tomb was Sarah, whose death gave occasion to the purchase of the ground from the sons of Heth. The particulars of this, the first legal contract recorded in history, are given in the twenty-third chapter of Genesis, and are said, by those familiar with the East, to correspond exactly with the mode of bargaining still used in Oriental regions.

Sarah is distinguished as the first woman of whom we have much detail in the Scripture, and as the only woman whose age is mentioned in the sacred volume. She was married in Abraham's early home in Ur of the Chaldees, and was the faithful companion of all his wanderings. She had her shortcomings, yet is she mentioned, in the First Epistle of Peter (iii. 5), as one of "the holy women of old who trusted in God," and it is certain that Abraham clung to her with hearty affection throughout life, and at death was greatly concerned to secure a permanent resting-place for her mortal remains. The illustration, with fine taste, represents him as led away from the cave after the funeral rites had been performed, yet once more turning back, with an eager and sorrowful gaze, toward the place where his beloved dead was buried out of his sight. It shows the test and the strength of his faith, that, although he had lived so many years in the land, and had had its length and breadth confirmed to him over and over by God's covenant and oath as the sure possession of his seed, he himself never owned any of it in actual fee, except this sepulchre. But Hebron is inseparably identified with him. The name by which it is known to-day, as it has been for centuries among the Arabs, is *El Khulil, i. e.*, "The Friend," in allusion to that honorable appellation thrice given to him in the Scripture, The Friend of God.



THE BURIAL OF SARAH.

ELIEZER AND REBEKAH.

THE twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis contains a circumstantial account of the marriage of Isaac, all the particulars of which are in accordance with manners and customs that still prevail in the East. Abraham consults not with his son, the person chiefly interested, but with Eliezer, the elder of his house—the steward, or confidential servant, to whom all that he had was intrusted. Eliezer is put under solemn oath to be faithful, and then sent far away, to Mesopotamia, to find among his master's kindred one who would be a suitable wife for the heir of the promise. The steward set out with large provision for his long journey, and arrived safely at the city of Nahor. Here he stopped outside the gate at a well to which it was the custom of the women to resort for water, as it still is in that region. And the illustration represents him seated by the curb, while his camels are in the distance. But here the simplicity of his piety is shown by his prayer. Aware of the importance of his errand, he invokes divine help, asking that the damsel who receives and responds to his request for a drink, may be the one whom the Lord designs for Isaac. His prayer was heard. The beautiful maiden whom he first addressed, and who did for him all that he asked and more, turned out to be Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the nephew of Abraham. And he found united in her all that he deemed necessary for the wife of his master's son: a pleasing exterior, a kindly disposition, and the approval of God. As soon as she told at home the character of the extraordinary visitor, Laban came and brought him to the house, where he was welcomed and provided for. But he would not eat until he had made known the cause of his coming, and how the Lord had answered his prayer, and had obtained the consent of Bethuel and Laban to their daughter's marriage. "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand or to the left." The intelligence and fidelity of Eliezer are as eminent as the faith of his master.

ELIEZER AND REBEKAH.

ISAAC BLESSING JACOB.

GENESIS XXVII.

THE patriarchal blessing was not an ordinary expression of good will, nor merely a prayer of unusual solemnity, but an authoritative prediction. It is not to be explained by the saying of Plato, that Socrates, when dying, was in that state in which men have most of the foreseeing power; nor by the doctrine of Pythagoras, that the soul sees the future when it is departing from the body; nor by the doctrine of some of the moderns, that the spirit of devoted men of God, in anticipation, soars to an elevated consciousness which manifests itself in prophetic foresight. On the contrary, this blessing stands by itself as a divine appointment by which the father of each family in the line of the promise made to Abraham, just before his death, informed his children how and in what manner the execution of that promise was to be effected through them. Sometimes the prophetic inspiration took a wide range and included events of various kinds, but its chief object was to define the channel by which the world-wide blessing was to be conferred upon the human family. Naturally, but not necessarily, the first-born son would be this channel, and if a change were to be made the father would announce it. Hence the anxiety of Jacob and Esau concerning the final benediction of their father. For God would speak through him, and the utterance thus made would be made irreversible.

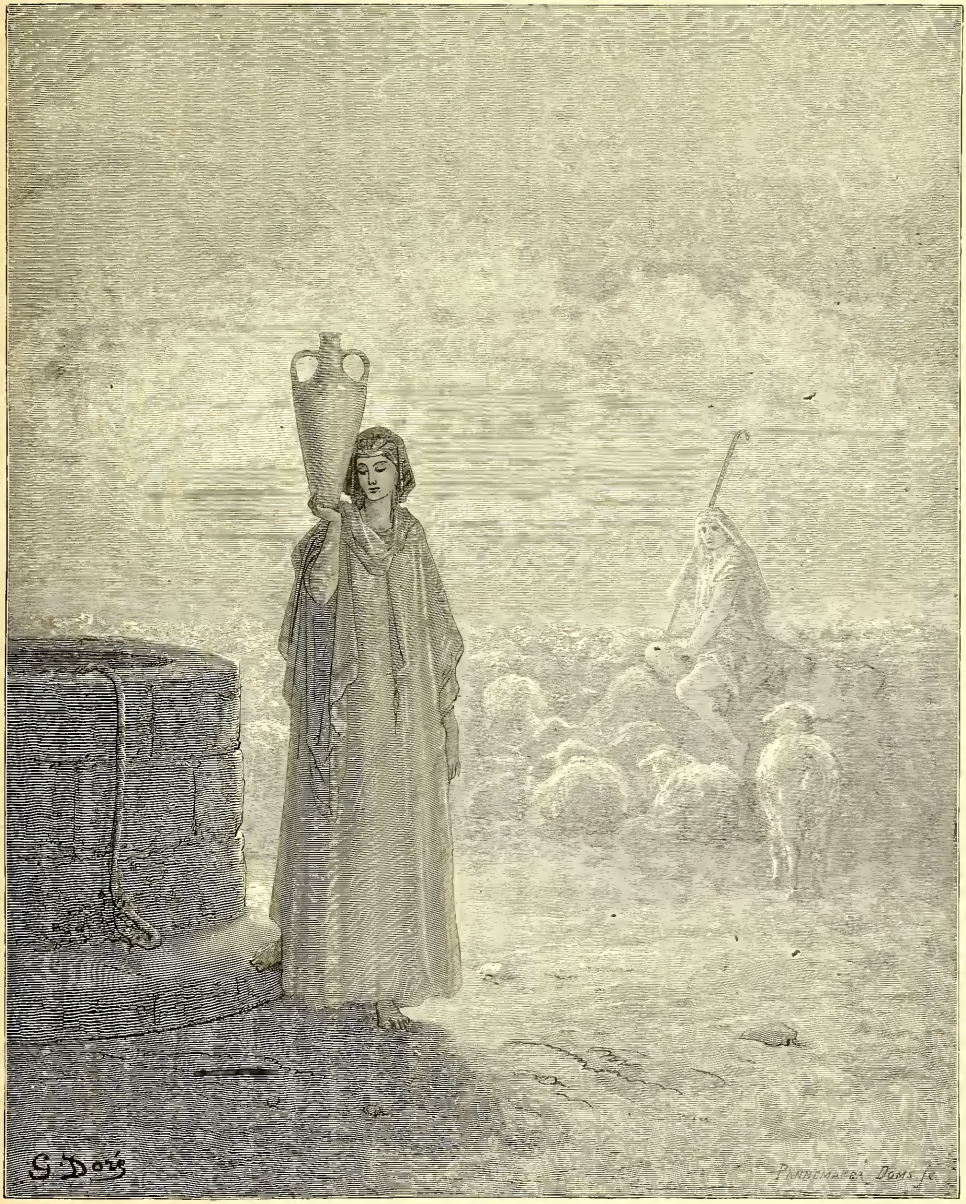
Thus it is to be explained that the blessing of Isaac, depicted in the illustration, was effectual, although it was gained by Jacob through a gross and inexcusable fraud practiced by him at the suggestion of his mother. The divine purpose had been from the beginning, as announced to Rebekah (xxv. 23), that "the elder should serve the younger." Mother and son should have left it to the Lord to secure his end in his own way, but their misconduct was not allowed to defeat his determination. Jacob received the blessing, and it could not be reversed. But God sorely visited the wrong-doing of the parties concerned. Rebekah soon lost her favorite son, and never saw him again in life; and Jacob was driven into exile, was defrauded by Laban, deceived by his sons, and mourned, for years, the loss of his beloved Joseph. The female figure in the picture is Rebekah looking away in anxious apprehension lest Esau should return before Isaac had finished bestowing the coveted boon.

ISAAC BLESSING JACOB.

JACOB TENDING THE FLOCKS OF LABAN.

GENESIS XXX.

THE illustration represents the patriarch performing the service by which he is to gain the beautiful and well-favored Rachel for his wife. He sits in the midst of his flock, while she stands by the well, from which she has just filled her water-jar. The scene is a fair expression of the pastoral life of the patriarchs on its poetical side, although we know from the language of Jacob (Gen. xxxi. 38–41), that there was another side to the service. It involved continuous toil and severe exposure. As he says: "In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and sleep departed from mine eyes." And yet the first seven years of this laborious service—which was the price Laban put upon his younger daughter—seemed to Jacob but a few days, for the love he had to her. It was a sore retribution to him that, after all, he was deceived by the substitution of the elder daughter in place of the younger, and had to serve yet seven years more, in order to gain the woman of his heart. But he had begun life by deceit, and could not wonder if it was meted to him as he had measured to others.



JACOB TENDING THE FLOCKS OF LABAN.

JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

GENESIS XXXVII.

THIS animated and expressive picture sets forth a sad picture of human depravity. The youngest son of Jacob is sold by his own brethren for a slave, and carried off to Egypt to suffer exile, bondage, and a life of hopeless toil. How came these men to perpetrate such an inhuman and barbarous crime? They were not heathen, nor degraded Canaanites, but, as grandchildren of Abraham, the friend of God, had been brought up under the pious traditions of three generations. The reason is given in a single clause (Gen. xxxvii. 11): "And his brethren envied him." They gave way to a passion which is often cherished almost unconsciously, and yet is more purely evil than any other. Anger, revenge, covetousness, claim to have some appearance of good. But envy has no such shelter. It is evil unalloyed. It is the breath of the old serpent. It feeds upon the fact that others are good or prosperous; but, instead of drawing from this motives for imitation or thankfulness, mourns over it and grudges it, and thus becomes what Solomon calls it, "Rottenness in the bones." In the present case it led to hatred, and hatred is the next thing to murder. The ten brothers stained their own name, perpetrated a horrible wrong upon the young and innocent Joseph, and, for long years, darkened the life of their venerable father.

Yet even here there is a bright side to the event. All this tissue of envy, malice, and cruelty was bringing to pass the designs of Him who is excellent in counsel and mighty in working. He intended to seclude His people, during their plastic period, from contact with the corrupt nations of Canaan, and, for this end, chose Egypt as the country in which the chosen seed should be transformed from a family into a nation. It was time for the first step in securing this transfer. Accordingly God's hand was in the whole proceeding; not that he influenced the brothers to their crime, for that was their own from first to last, as they themselves acknowledged; but that he ordered the circumstances of which their wickedness availed itself. Their pasturing in Dothan, Joseph's mission, their sight of him in the distance, the suggestion of the pit, the opportune arrival of the Midianitish traders, Reuben's absence and the proposal of Judah—all these were links in the chain which led to the result. Yet this does not lessen the atrocious wrong-doing of the brothers, for they were free and voluntary throughout. Both sides of the transaction are well presented in Joseph's own words (Gen. l. 20): "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring it to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive."

JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

JOSEPH INTERPRETING PHARAOH'S DREAM.

GENESIS XLI.

This well-drawn and striking picture is admirable for its verisimilitude. All the details of the scene—the building, the columns, the figures on the wall, the dresses, and the insignia of the attendants—are in keeping with the manners of ancient Egypt. The occurrence itself is of great interest as the turning-point of Joseph's career. On the morning of the day when it occurred he was not only in private life, but a prisoner and a slave; in the evening he was the foremost man in all Egypt, next after the king. The reason was that the monarch, the previous night, had had a double dream, which none of his diviners could interpret. One of his chief officers related how he had been relieved, in a similar embarrassment, by a certain Hebrew youth, a slave of Potiphar. The king sent in haste for Joseph, who, on his arrival, informed him that his dream of seven fat kine swallowed by seven lean kine, and seven good ears swallowed by seven thin ears, denoted seven years of plenty followed by as many of famine; and he advised the appointment of one supreme executive officer to store the surplus of the plenteous years in reserve for the period of famine. The advice was taken, and the author of it received the appointment.

A modern book of note remarks upon this narrative, that "the wise men of Egypt must indeed have been fools not to understand these symbols, which embraced both the animal and vegetable wealth of the land." This is a strange saying. Of course the explanation seems not only natural but simple and easy after it has been stated; and we are all wise after the fact; but who, previously, could have conjectured that the twofold dream meant just this, and nothing else? Joseph expressly disclaimed any power of his own. He said (Gen. xli. 16), "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

The occurrence related here gives no countenance to superstitious notions as to the significance of dreams in our day. Formerly the dream was a mode of divine revelation, and proper means were afforded for attesting its character. No such vouchers now exist, and it is, therefore, mere delusion to be frightened or elated by what occurs in sleep. God, of course, may impart information in that way; but that he does not, is admitted by all careful observers of divine providence and human experience. It is true that there have been cases in which remarkable dreams have been followed by corresponding occurrences in actual life; but they who note this forget that there are very many more cases in which no such correspondence ensues.

JOSEPH INTERPRETING PHARAOH'S DREAM.

JOSEPH MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

GENESIS XLV.

THIS admirable illustration, drawn with the same fidelity to the details of Egyptian life and manners as the preceding, presents the *denouement* or unfolding point of the interesting narrative prolonged through seven chapters of the book of Genesis. It is Joseph's discovery of himself to his brothers. Such recognitions or discoveries have always been esteemed the most effective features of a story or a drama, and, as such, are carefully discussed in the *Poetic* of Aristotle, who quotes striking examples from Homer and the dramatic poets. He has quoted none, however, nor does all literature furnish any, superior to the one before us. Moses, relating simple facts, has constructed a story equal to any product of the dramatic art. The tale, which rivets the ear of listening children, lays the same magic spell upon mature and accomplished scholars. What dramatic elements it contains! what passions, good and bad, it exhibits! what eloquence, what pathos, what vivid contrasts, what varied characters! And yet how naturally the whole history unrolls itself, from the first step in Canaan down to the closing scene in the governor's palace!

Yet, striking as the narrative is in a literary or dramatic point of view, it is far more so in its providential aspects, direct and indirect. It was a constituent part of the procedure by which the chosen seed developed its sinew and muscle in preparation for the chosen land. So, too, with the incidental details. The permission of evil, its counteraction, its modification, its conversion into good; the discipline of sorrow and trial; the combination of divine purpose and human freedom; the safety of unswerving rectitude; the folly of sin; the keenness of temptation, and the way to overcome it—all these points, and many more, render the story of Joseph as profitable as it is interesting.

For a long time prior to the scene depicted in the illustration, Joseph had practiced a laborious and painful self-restraint. But the time had come for throwing off the mask; and, indeed, the wonderful speech of Judah quite overpowered Joseph, so that, excluding strangers, he made the announcement with flowing tears. His brethren were told that he was the boy whom they had sold as a slave twenty-two years before. They could not believe it. But he gave irresistible proof, saying, "I am Joseph, whom *ye sold into Egypt*." Here was a secret known only to themselves—hidden carefully even from Benjamin. The other possessor of this guilty secret must be their long-lost brother himself. No wonder that, in the picture every form is bowed and every face covered.

JOSEPH MAKING HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

EXODUS II.

NOTHING is more remarkable in the developments of divine providence than the way in which human wickedness is made to defeat itself. A signal instance was seen in the history of Joseph. Another is furnished in the graphic illustration before us. Pharaoh, alarmed by the rapid increase of the children of Israel, gave orders that every male child should be slain as soon as born; yet this cruel edict gave occasion to the training and preparation of the very man who was to lead Israel in triumph out of Egypt. There was born to a pious pair of the house of Levi a child of extraordinary beauty, said, in Acts vii. 20, to be "exceeding fair" (*lit.* fair to God, *i. e.*, in his view, who judges truly), and the mother seems to have regarded this as a peculiar token of divine approval, and a sign that God had some special purpose concerning him. Accordingly she hid him for three months, and when this concealment was no longer possible, she resorted to an expedient which, although trying to her feelings, yet offered some prospect of deliverance. She constructed a little chest of rushes, *i. e.*, of the papyrus, once very common in Egypt, but now wholly extinct. This was daubed with slime (the bitumen or asphalt of the Dead Sea) and pitch, and thus made water-tight. Having put the child into this ark, as it was called, she placed it in the reeds on the bank of the Nile, not at random, but, as the sequel shows, at a place where Pharaoh's daughter was accustomed to bathe, in accordance with a custom which, although now wholly unknown in Egypt, once was very prevalent there, as appears by the monuments.

Then occurred the scene set forth in the picture. The royal lady saw the child, and her heart was touched by its tears. The exposure led her at once to conclude that it was one of the Hebrews' children; but she was so won by the attractiveness of the babe that she determined to bring it up, notwithstanding the king's prohibition. The services of the mother were secured to nurse the child for the princess, and so Moses was put upon that course which had such marvellous results. Born a slave, and under sentence of death, he was spared and reared in a palace. As an adopted son of the princess, he would be, of course, as we are told by Stephen (Acts vii. 22) that he was, "educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," a wisdom that was proverbial in the ancient world. Such was the fact, and it is apparent in the whole course of Moses, the most illustrious name in the Hebrew annals. An extraordinary preparation was needed for his extraordinary mission, and he received it by means of the device of his mother.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

THE WAR AGAINST GIBEON.

JOSHUA X.

THE conquest of Canaan, after the reduction of Jericho and Ai, was accomplished mainly by two great victories gained by Joshua: one at Gibeon, over the confederate tribes and kings of southern Palestine; the other at the waters of Merom, over a similar confederation of the people of the north. In both cases the attack was made suddenly, and the enemy was taken by surprise. The leader of Israel was not only a man of integrity, faith, and prayer, but also a born soldier, endowed with the decision, promptness, courage, foresight, and unconquerable will which are requisite for success in war. Joshua was just as well qualified by his gifts, natural and acquired, to lead an army, as Moses was, by his character and training, to legislate for a people.

The first of these two great battles was fought at Gibeon. Joshua having learned that five kings were encamped against Gibeon, made a night march from Gilgal, and fell upon the foe like a thunderbolt. An immediate rout was the result. The discomfiture was made more complete by a storm of great hailstones, which inflicted a greater loss of life than even the sword of the conquerors. But in the thick of the pursuit the shades of night began to draw on, and threaten a fatal interruption of the work. It was greatly important that the full fruits of the victory should be gathered, and hence occurred the remarkable interposition set forth in the illustration. Joshua was inspired to command the sun and the moon to stand still, and those heavenly bodies obeyed his order. They shed forth their light "until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." Well does the historian add, "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man."

The account has often been made the theme of severe and derisive remarks, for which there is no excuse. For it by no means implies a sudden arrest of the revolution of the earth upon its axis. According to the usual method of Scripture, which describes things according to their appearance, all that we need to hold is that there was simply an optical pause of the sun—an astronomical phenomenon which supernaturally prolonged the light, so that there was time for Israel to complete the overthrow of their foes. To the rest of the world there was no change in the appearance of the skies. That God was able to effect this astounding miracle, no believer in his existence can deny or doubt. That it was a fitting thing to do under the circumstances, that it must have wrought a mighty increase of the zeal of the people, and so contributed largely to their success, seems apparent on the very face of the matter.

THE WAR AGAINST GIBEON.

SISERA SLAIN BY JAEL.

JUDGES IV.

For twenty years the Israelites had groaned under the oppressive yoke of a Canaanite king whose rule extended from the northern boundary of the land down to the river Kishon. The Lord was pleased to sell this mighty potentate into the hands of a woman. An inspired prophetess directed the campaign. When the call went forth for all the people to come to the help of the Lord, only a few complied. Gilead remained passive beyond the Jordan. Asher sheltered himself in his creeks by the seashore, and Reuben preferred the bleatings of his flocks to the shock of arms. But Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives in the high places of the field. Ten thousand of these hardy mountaineers rallied around the standard of Deborah and Barak, at Mount Tabor. An impetuous charge upon the enemy resulted in the annihilation of Sisera and all his host, notwithstanding their superiority in numbers and equipments. Sisera, the captain of the host, fled away on foot, and naturally turned his steps homeward toward Kedesh, and, on the way, took refuge in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, with whom he had been at peace. She received him hospitably, gave him a cup of thickened milk, and covered him with a mantle as he lay down to rest. Then, when he was overborne by fatigue and sleep, she took a tent-pin and drove it into and through his temples, fastening him to the ground. When Barak came up in hot pursuit, Jael went to meet him, and said, "Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest." Her fulfillment of this promise is the subject of the picture before us. She has drawn the curtain and disclosed the mighty chieftain lying dead on the earth.

Jael performed the bloody deed not from personal malice nor from cruelty. She has no personal wrong to revenge, no by-ends to seek. But Sisera represents to her the oppressor of the people of God, with whose life her own and that of her race have become identified. A ruthless warrior lies before her, the violator of a thousand laws of right, and the enemy of God. Shall she allow him to recover strength, recall his scattered troops, and again renew the intolerable oppression of former years? or shall she, with one bold stroke, put the finishing touch to the recent victory, and end forever the career of Israel's most formidable foe? She decides for freedom and Israel and God, and Sisera lies pinned to the earth—smitten not by the sword of a soldier, but by the hand of a woman. Viewing the matter in this light, Deborah pronounces Jael blessed above women; and we, while regretting and reprobating her falsehood, may yet join in celebrating her intrepidity, her zeal, and her deliberate preference of the friends of God to his enemies.

SISERA SLAIN BY JAEL.

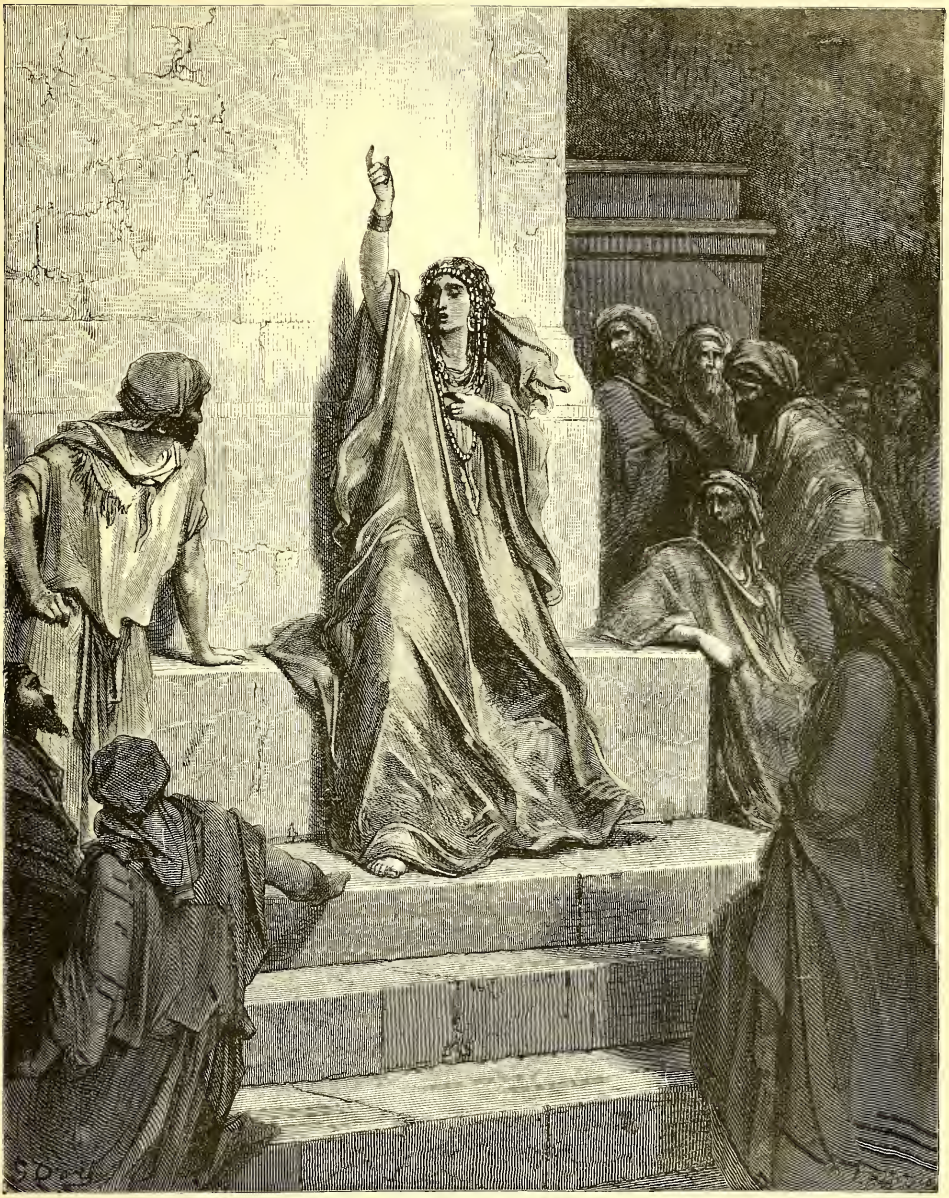
DEBORAH'S SONG OF TRIUMPH.

JUDGES V.

THE illustration represents a female figure in the foreground, with uplifted hand and impassioned face, while, on either side of her, stand those who listen with eager interest and profound attention. The artist has not exaggerated. Indeed no artist could exaggerate the power of the only female judge mentioned in Scripture. Her position was in every way exceptional, for she was "a prophetess," and prophetic functions were assigned to no one of the Judges before Samuel. The subjective nature and position of women were interrupted in her case, and she was elevated above her countrymen by the Spirit of God dwelling within her. She sat under the palm-tree called by her name, which was in the center of the land, somewhere between Benjamin and Ephraim, and to her came the tribes for judgment. But not only in internal affairs and domestic disputes did she decide among the people, but she also took the lead in a great national crisis. Her name is conspicuous among those eminent women who, in times of distress, when men despaired, came to the front and organized victory. Her spirit was like a torch for Israel, kindling their languid hearts. As an organ of the divine impulses she became the rallying point of her countrymen, and communicated to them her own moral energy, so that they were ready, when headed even by a woman, to defy the master of nine hundred chariots of iron.

Some women are great in words, others in deeds. Deborah was distinguished in both. Her well-known Song stands almost by itself. Produced at least eight hundred years before Pindar, it surpasses in dignity, fire, and pathos every other ode, ancient or modern, and yet has a well-ordered symmetry and beauty, such as would do honor to the most cultivated age. After inviting kings and princes as a fit audience for such a recital, she recalls the prodigies formerly exhibited :

> "Lord, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,
> When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
> The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
> Yea, the clouds dropped water.
> The mountains melted at the presence of the Lord,
> Even that Sinai, at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel."



DEBORAH'S SONG OF TRIUMPH.

JEPHTHAH MET BY HIS DAUGHTER.

JUDGES XI.

THE plate represents one of the most pathetic events in all literature. A daughter seeking to praise and congratulate her father, unconsciously becomes the means of plunging him into the deepest affliction.

Jephthah, a man marked with a stain by his birth, having been driven from his home, went off into a neighboring region, where, gathering to himself a number of men of desperate fortunes, he became a sort of freebooter. His reputation for daring and skill in arms induced his countrymen, when contending with the Ammonites, to send for him to be their leader, offering to make him head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. He accepted their offer, but, before joining battle, sent a formal demand for the withdrawal of the enemy, and, when this was declined, renewed the demand, with an elaborate statement of its grounds—a circumstance which shows that he could not have been the wild, lawless, reckless person that some writers have imagined. The king of the Ammonites refusing to yield, Jephthah proceeded to attack him; but, before doing so, made a solemn vow that, in case he returned successful, he would offer to the Lord whatever came forth from the doors of his house to meet him. He was successful, and inflicted a very great slaughter upon the national foes. But his vow had a very tragic termination. As he returned to his house his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances.

The illustration represents her with her companions engaged in the joyful celebration of the victory, and eager to welcome him by whose valor and skill it had been gained. Nothing can be more affecting than the contrast between her jubilant ecstasy and the dreadful doom to which it is to subject her. She is without blame, simply indulging the natural impulses of filial piety, and yet this very song of triumph renders her the victim of her father's rash vow. Parallels have been traced in the Iphigenia of Homer and Æschylus, and in the Antigone of Sophocles; but these classic fables lack the touching element in this narrative, that it is the maiden herself who unwittingly provokes the tragedy, and falls, in a moment, from the height of exultation into the pit of despair.

JEPHTHAH MET BY HIS DAUGHTER

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER AND HER COMPANIONS.

JUDGES XI.

For many centuries it was an almost universal opinion that the daughter of Jephthah was actually slain by her father's hand, and then burned as a sacrifice. But this conclusion was so horrible that, for ages past, it has been vehemently contested, and many still hold that, instead of being sacrificed, she was shut up in a separate house and kept in perpetual celibacy. But the words of the narrative are too plain to admit of being interpreted in this way. The father's vow was "to offer for a burnt-offering" whatever met him on his return, and the historian says that "he did with her according to his vow." But neither his vow nor its fulfillment were agreeable to the religion which Jephthah acknowledged. Human sacrifices were expressly and repeatedly forbidden in the Divine Word, and the practice of offering them was one of the sins for which the Canaanites were destroyed. There was no excuse, therefore, for the great wrong which was done in this case.

Yet the incident illustrates the stern resolution of the father and the heroic submission of the daughter. The former deliberately renounced the hope of perpetuating his family, and sacrificed his parental feelings in order to keep his word; while the latter seems cheerfully to have accepted her terrible fate, in view of the victory achieved over the national enemies. All that she asked was a short delay, in order to bewail her lot in the gorges of the mountains. It is as thus engaged that the artist represents her, in his sweet and mournful picture, in which every figure, by its posture and expression, forms a vivid contrast to the preceding illustration.

The sacrifice of the young maiden was not the slaughter of an unwilling victim, as when the Gaul and the Greek were buried alive in the Roman Forum, but the willing offering of a devoted heart to free, as she supposed, her father and her country from a terrible obligation. Hence the exhibition of pure obedience and overpowering love has attracted the attention of several poets. One of them, Lord Byron, in his Hebrew Melodies, voices the thought of the generous victim in these stanzas, addressed to her father:

"Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent;
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my father and country are free.

"When this blood of thy giving has gushed,
When the voice that thou lovest is hushed,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died."

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER AND HER COMPANIONS.

SAMSON SLAYING THE LION.

JUDGES XIV.

THE longest and the deadliest of the enemies of the chosen people were the Philistines, who occupied the strip of sea-coast on the south-west of Canaan. They made their appearance at the close of the period of the Judges, and were not finally extinguished until the time of Hezekiah. They were rich and powerful, and bore inveterate hatred toward their Israelitish neighbors. The weight of their hostility was most felt by the small tribe of Dan, whose territory lay between them and the hill-country, and it was out of this tribe that the deliverer came. His name was Samson.

He was given to his parents at a time when they had long been without children, and the revelation which announced his coming declared that he should be "a Nazarite unto God from the womb," *i. e.*, separated from the rest of the nation by a peculiar consecration. No razor should come upon his head, neither should he drink wine nor strong drink. The earlier Judges had been prepared to a certain extent for their work before their election, as, for example, Jephthah had been a successful military leader; but Samson was chosen from birth, and grew up in private life. The others wrought their deliverances in co-operation with the rest of the people, but Samson simply with his own right arm. He alone, without an army and without followers, fought and delivered. This was because the Lord blessed him, and not because of his own natural force. "The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times," as he grew up. This was not a demoniac frenzy, such as is described in mythical legends, but a divine impulse manifesting itself in deeds, as, with the prophets, it manifested itself in words. It always has a purpose, and that purpose is one connected with the fortunes of the covenant people. Samson, the prodigy of strength, has his Pagan counterpart in Hercules; but the moral ends of the two heroes are as far apart as heaven and earth.

The illustration sets forth the first occasion in which Samson displays his extraordinary force. On the way to Timnath a young lion roared against him, and Samson had no companions, and, as we are told, no weapons. Ordinarily such a meeting could have but one termination; but, in this case, the man was endowed with supernatural power. And so the youthful hero seized the furious beast and rent his jaws asunder as easily as one would have rent a kid of the goats. The event was not a mere meaningless marvel, but was intended partly to give occasion to the famous riddle which led to such sad results to the Philistines, and partly as a preparation of the young man for his subsequent gigantic feats of strength.

SAMSON SLAYING THE LION.

SAMSON AND DELILAH.

JUDGES XVI.

SAMSON, in one sense the strongest of men, in another was the weakest. The physical and the moral in him existed in an inverse ratio. He could carry off the huge gates of a city, or slay a thousand men with an ass's jawbone, but he could not resist the blandishments of a woman. His whole history is inextricably bound up with adventures in connection with the sex, and always, as it would seem, with strange women, not the daughters of Israel. First was the Philistine maiden of Timnath, whom he married and lost, and who caused his first conflict with the national foes; then the courtesan of Gaza, who led to his extraordinary exploit in carrying away the gates of the city; and, finally, the well-known Delilah, of the valley of Sorek, by whom his downfall was accomplished.

She appears to have been of great personal beauty, but utterly mercenary; and Samson's entanglement with her admits of no excuse. He was no longer young, and ought to have been superior to the ordinary snares of sensuality. But he was a mere simpleton in these matters, and went after Delilah "as an ox goeth to the slaughter," with brutish unconsciousness of his folly and sin and danger. Even after repeated evidence of her treachery, still he could not tear himself from her company, and at last she succeeded.

The great desire of the Philistines was to ascertain the secret of his strength. Samson was no giant like the heathen Cyclops, else they would have been at no loss to explain his strength; nor were his shoulders sixty ells apart, as the Rabbins say. They, doubtless, supposed that there was some occult magical charm by which he accomplished his exploits, and that, if they could discover this, means could be taken to render it powerless. They offered Delilah a liberal sum (equal to many thousand dollars of the money of our time) if she would ascertain the secret, so as to enable them to subdue their enemy. She accepted the proposal, and began to work upon the affections of her lover. At first he amused himself with her attempts, and three several times mocked her and her employers by suggesting methods which he knew would be vain. Delilah redoubled her entreaties, and vexed him "almost to death," and at last succeeded. Just here is the juncture represented in the illustration. The temptress stands by him in all her personal fascination, with folded hands and an air of meek and quiet expectation, while he looks up at her, holding in one hand those locks which were the cause of his extraordinary feats. This they were not by any incantation or charm, but simply as the symbol of entire consecration to God.

SAMSON AND DELILAH.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON.

JUDGES XVI.

NOWHERE is what has been called the irony of fate more signally illustrated than in the close of Samson's life. He had always displayed the pranks, as well as the strength, of a giant. A light, jocose, mocking tone pervaded all his procedures, as in the riddle he propounded, the use of jackals to devastate the cornfields, the employment of a jawbone as a weapon of war, and the succession of quaint devices by which he turned the plans of Delilah and her friends into derision. But when he was at last entrapped, robbed of his strength, and made a blind prisoner in a mill, the Philistines brought him forth, on a gala-day, to make sport for them. He who had once so successfully ridiculed them becomes himself a laughing-stock.

But the sport cost the people dearly. Their jubilant festival had a very tragic termination. For Samson pulled the house down over their heads. It is not possible to give a definite architectural description of the building thus overthrown. All we know is that it was so constructed as to rest, in a great measure, upon two central pillars. Between these Samson stood while undergoing the mockery and insult of his foes, and afterward he asked and obtained liberty to feel the pillars and obtain rest by leaning upon them. By this time the hair of his head, which had been shorn, had grown again. But this mere outward fact did not secure to him the return of supernatural strength. The gifts of Scripture are not a species of magic. The hair was only a sign of consecration, and perhaps suggested to Samson that he might have a return of prosperity. At all events he prays: prays for remembrance, for recovery of his former power, and for vengeance upon those whom he had been raised up to subdue or destroy. So eager is his desire for this end that he is willing to perish with the Philistines. God hears him and endows him as of old.

The illustration describes the result. Samson bows himself, with a pillar in either arm, and at once the entire building collapses with a terrific crash. The broken pillars and tumbling capitals which the artist has drawn, as well as the fleeing crowd, and the bowed and straining figure of him who causes the ruin, vivid as they are, can hardly equal the terror of the scene. The temple becomes a sepulcher, and "the dead whom Samson slew at his death were more than they whom he slew in his life." His act has sometimes been called suicidal, but without reason. His aim was to gain a great victory for Israel, and if this cost him his own life, he was willing to make, and did make, the sacrifice.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON.

NAOMI AND HER DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW.

RUTH I.

THE little book of Ruth has justly been compared to one of the beds of wild flowers, exquisite in beauty and variety of hue, which are found in every part of Palestine. It is an interesting contrast to the book of Judges, which immediately precedes it in our Canon; and to pass from one to the other is like a transition from the dark, terrific scenes of a tragedy of Æschylus to the fresh and beautiful landscapes of a pastoral idyl of Theocritus. Every part of it breathes the spirit of repose and love. It is, moreover, a testimony to the humane and comprehensive aim underlying the Mosaic institutions. Israel was indeed a people that dwelt alone. It was rigidly secluded from the rest of the world in order that the chosen seed might be kept pure until the time came for a universal dispensation. Yet there are constant intimations, in word and in act, that there was hope for the outside nations. And here we have an account of the way in which a daughter of the uncircumcised Moabites was introduced into the fellowship of the people of God, and became a member of the line from which sprang the most illustrious of Israel's kings.

Elimelech, driven by famine, emigrated, with his wife and two sons, from Bethlehem to the fields of Moab, where his sons intermarried with women of the country. But misfortune followed the household. First Elimelech died, and then both of his sons. At the end of ten years Naomi was left with her two daughters-in-law. Learning that the famine had ceased in her native land, she proposed to return thither, and the younger women set out to accompany her. But on the way the mother, while acknowledging all their kindness to the dead and to herself, bade them return home, where better prospects awaited them than any she could offer. One of them, Orpah, complied with the suggestion, and turned back weeping. The other refused and clave to Naomi. This is the scene the picture sets forth: Orpah turning away, with her hands to her face, but Ruth clinging, with intense affection, to her husband's mother. When Naomi bade her imitate the example of her sister-in-law, she refused in words which have become classic as the utterance of an intense and sacred affection. "Urge me not to leave thee, or to return from following thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Intense as is the love here shown, it is purely moral and spiritual. Neither self-interest, nor hope, nor vanity mix themselves up with it.

NAOMI AND HER DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW.

RUTH AND BOAZ.

RUTH II.

THIS picture represents a scene which occurred very soon after the two women came back to Bethlehem. Naomi had returned, as she said, "empty," without friends and without means. In her destitution, Ruth, as the younger and better able to bear fatigue, proposed to go and glean in the harvest-field what might serve for their needs. Naomi consented, and the young stranger went forth to gather that which, according to the beneficent law of Israel (Lev. xxiii. 22; Deut. xxiv. 19), was left for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. A kind Providence directed her steps to the field of a wealthy and influential citizen, who was also a distant relative of her deceased husband. While she was at work, the proprietor, Boaz, came to visit the reapers, and exchanged with them the beautiful greetings which, in their mouths, were more than a mere form, he saying, "The Lord be with you!" and they replying, "The Lord bless thee!"

But soon Boaz observed among the reapers a new form—one distinguished by her appearance and bearing as a stranger—and he inquired of the overseer who it was. The overseer not only mentioned her name and origin, but also her propriety of conduct and her diligence, since she had been almost uninterruptedly engaged in her work since the morning. Boaz recalled the story, which, of course, he must have heard, of the young Moabitess who had forsaken home and friends in order to attach herself to Naomi and Naomi's God. It is this point which the artist has chosen to represent. The beautiful maiden stoops in the foreground, gathering the scattered stalks, and the reapers are carrying away the bundles, while Boaz is standing near, in conversation with the overseer. In the background are the camels, which made the train of the wealthy proprietor. The issue of the interview was in accordance with its commencement. Boaz not only permitted her to continue in his field, but charged her not to go elsewhere, and gave directions to the young men to treat her courteously, and even to let fall, occasionally, something from the bundles for her to glean. Ultimately, as all know, Boaz and Ruth were united in marriage, and became progenitors of our Lord. And although one was a child of Moab, it may well be doubted whether the whole tribe of Judah could furnish a pair more worthy to receive that honor, each of them being conspicuous for every social and domestic virtue.

RUTH AND BOAZ.

THE RETURN OF THE ARK.

1 SAMUEL VI.

THIS striking illustration exhibits a party of reapers interrupted in their work and thoroughly surprised by the vision of the Ark of the Covenant in the distance, coming toward them in a cart drawn by lowing kine, without a driver. The varied postures of the persons in the foreground indicate a pleased astonishment.

The explanation is this: Several months before, the Israelites having been defeated in battle by the Philistines, instead of humbling themselves before God, and thus securing his favor, sent for the ark to go with them to the conflict, in the superstitious belief that the mere presence of an object so sacred would secure them success. But God rebuked their superstition by sending another defeat, and allowing the ark itself to be captured. The Philistines were delighted with their success, and carried the ark off as a distinguished trophy. But they soon found that their gain was a loss. A fearful disease smote the people. Wherever they took the ark—to Ashdod, to Gath, to Ekron—the same result followed. The hand of God was heavy upon both small and great, and there was a deadly destruction. In their terror they determined to send the cause of their trouble back to its original place. To satisfy themselves that this was the right course, they put it upon a new cart, together with certain golden offerings, and then attached the cart to a yoke of milch kine, whose calves were shut up at home; reasoning that if the dumb beasts, contrary to what would be their natural course, took the road toward Israel, it might be assumed that the ark was the cause of their troubles. The experiment succeeded perfectly. The kine followed a straight course to Bethshemesh, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left.

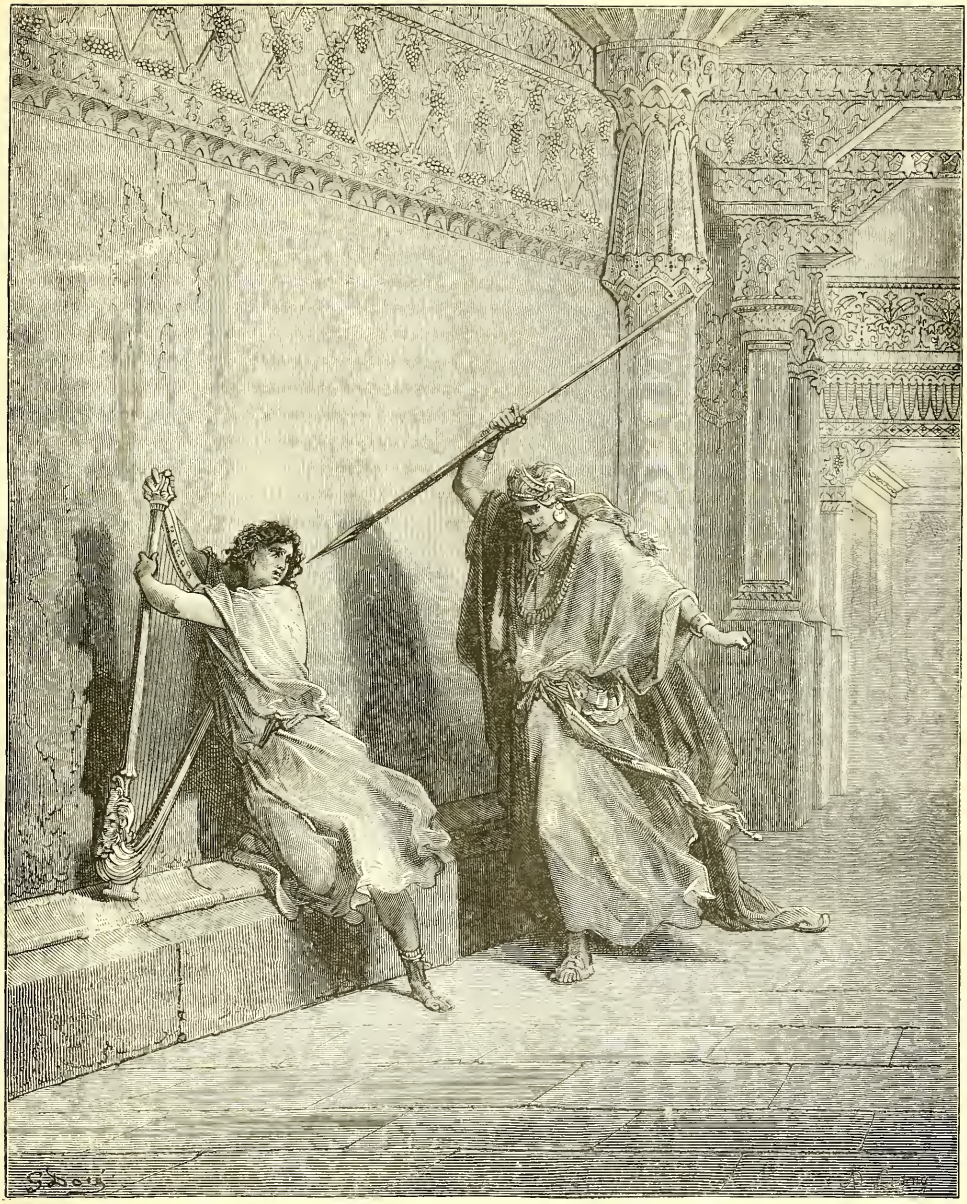
This was the sight, represented in the plate as surrounded with a blaze of radiance, which attracted the attention of the reapers, and filled them with extreme joy. The absence of the ark was a constant source of humiliation and shame, and its return, in such an extraordinary manner, would, of course, be greeted with rapture.

THE RETURN OF THE ARK.

SAUL AND DAVID.

1 SAMUEL XVIII.

THE scene depicted is the first expression of what became the master-passion of the life of Saul, the king of Israel. He was envious of David, and determined to get him out of the way. The occasion of this feeling was very simple. After the successful campaign against the Philistines, the troops engaged returned in triumph to the cities of Israel. They were met, generally, at the gates by companies of women, who, playing on the tabret and dancing to their own music, chanted in responsive chorus rhythmic lines adapted to the occasion. At the end of every strophe came this refrain, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Very likely nothing more was meant by this than an expression of joy, with such exaggeration as strong emotion is always prone to indulge in. But the sensitive soul of Saul, the more inclined to be suspicious since Samuel had foretold the taking of the kingdom from him, took offense at the implied preference of David, and he murmured, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom?" The thought was gall and wormwood to his heart, and the next day, instead of being soothed by the music of David's harp, he aimed a javelin at the head of the musician, who escaped only by dexterously evading its point.



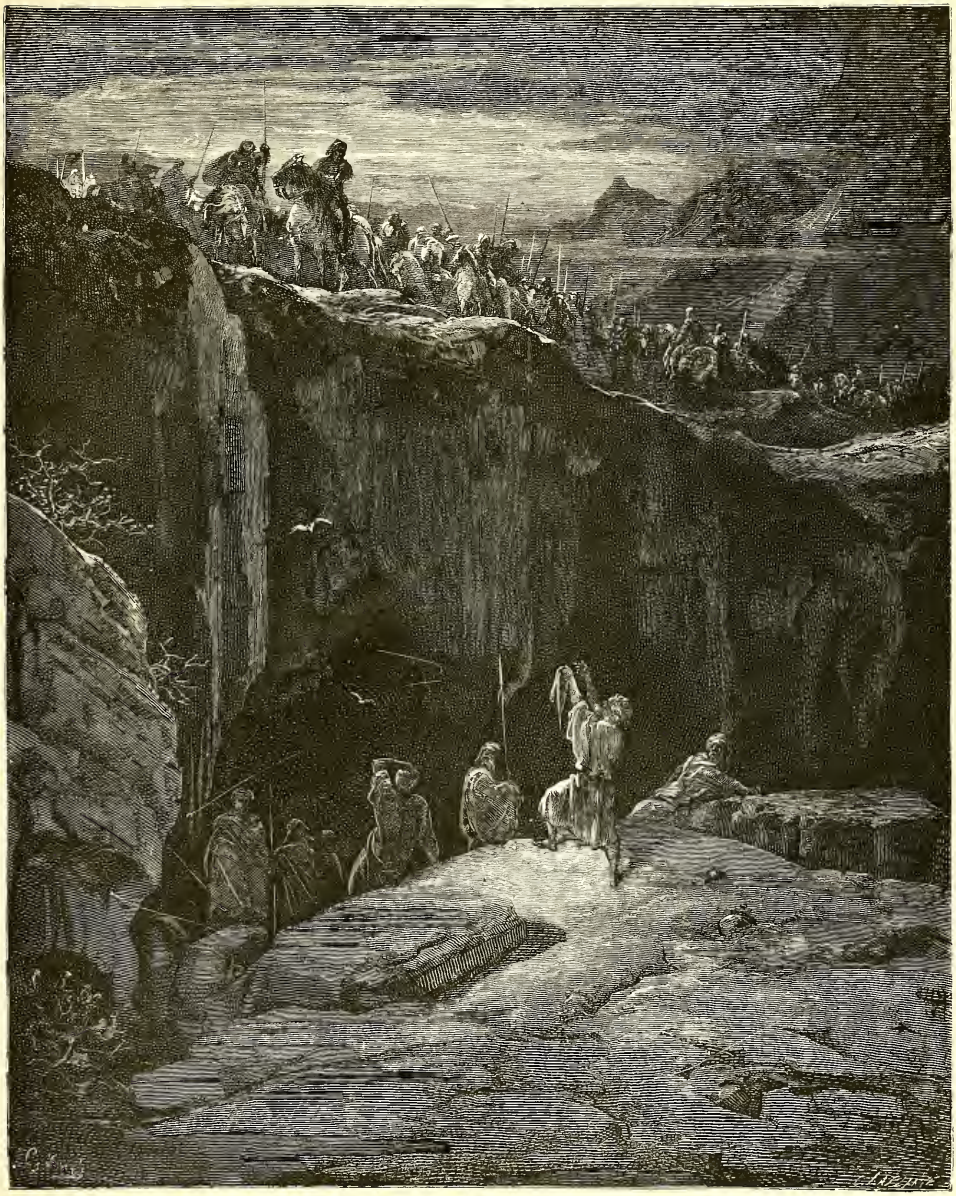
SAUL AND DAVID.

DAVID SPARING SAUL.

1 SAMUEL XXIV.

We have the same parties in this as in the preceding illustration, but the circumstances are widely different. There Saul was seeking David's life; here David generously forbears to take Saul's. The case was this: The king, learning that David had gone to Engedi, pursued him at the head of three thousand men, but, singularly enough, fell entirely into his power. Seeking relief from the mid-day heat he went into the very cave where David and his men were concealed. David's companions regarded the occurrence as a providential opportunity for ending the strife by putting Saul to death. But he could not bring himself to consider it in that light. He would bide God's time, and not allow it to be said of him that he had come into the kingdom by the assassination of his predecessor. So he contented himself by cutting off a portion of Saul's robe, which he could easily do without disturbing the monarch's repose. When the king rose and passed out to join his troops, David followed him, and cried out, "My lord the king," and having arrested his attention, made an earnest protestation of his innocence of any evil design, and, as proof of it, pointed to the skirt which he held in his hand, which he had taken from his robe when he might just as easily have taken off his head. Saul was apparently melted in contrition, and drew off his men; but David was unwilling to trust himself to the keeping of one so impulsive and suspicious, and returned to the cave. The interview left them both as it had found them. But David had furnished a signal example of self-control and forbearance, and Saul had rejected another inducement to forsake his malicious persecution.

The striking scene is well presented in the illustration. There are very many places in Palestine where men converse easily across a deep gorge which it would take hours to go around. The artist, therefore, has placed the king, with his serried host, on the top of a precipitous cliff, while David stands on a lesser elevation behind, attended only by his few followers. Holding up the fragment of the royal garment, he cries, "My father, see; yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it."



DAVID SPARING SAUL.

DEATH OF SAUL.

1 SAMUEL XXXI.

NEVER did the promise of a fair and noble life ripen into such bitter fruit as in the case of Israel's first king. He seemed to tower as much above the rest of the nation in intellect, heart, and will as he did in stature. But self-will and disobedience drew down upon him the frown of Jehovah, and thenceforward his life was one of constant moral deterioration. His splendid opportunities and ample resources were all thrown away. He went from bad to worse, until at the end he committed a sin, the thought of which would once have made him shudder, and which he had severely punished in others. When about to join battle in the plain of Esdraelon, where so often the fate of Palestine has been decided by arms, he found no helper anywhere. As he said, "The Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams." In his perplexity he resorted to necromancy, just as all who forsake the true religion generally fall into superstition. In this case, however, the Lord was pleased to use the sorcery of the woman of Endor, not to guide or comfort the sorrow-stricken king, but to forewarn him of his impending doom. The unhappy king, hearing the fearful words, fell his whole length on the ground and was sore afraid, and there was no strength left in him. But he made out, at last, to return to his camp.

The next day the Philistines charged the Israelite army and drove them up the heights of Gilboa. Here a great multitude was slain, and among them the three eldest sons of Saul. Amidst the shower of Philistine archers, or hard-pressed by their charioteers, Saul was sore wounded, and, dreading to fall alive into the hands of his foes, besought his armor-bearer to dispatch him at once. He refused, and then Saul fell upon his sword and died. And his servant followed his example. The artist represents the scene as it was accomplished: the victims of madness and despair lying pierced by their own weapons, while the foes are dashing over the hill.

Saul fell with all his sins upon his head—his last act a sin; but his generous rival, David, celebrated the sad event in a beautiful ode which has been admired in every age. To this day, when a great man is carried to his tomb, the most appropriate music for the occasion is found in the exquisite composition which seeks to express, in sound, this lament of David, and which is known as "The Dead March in Saul."

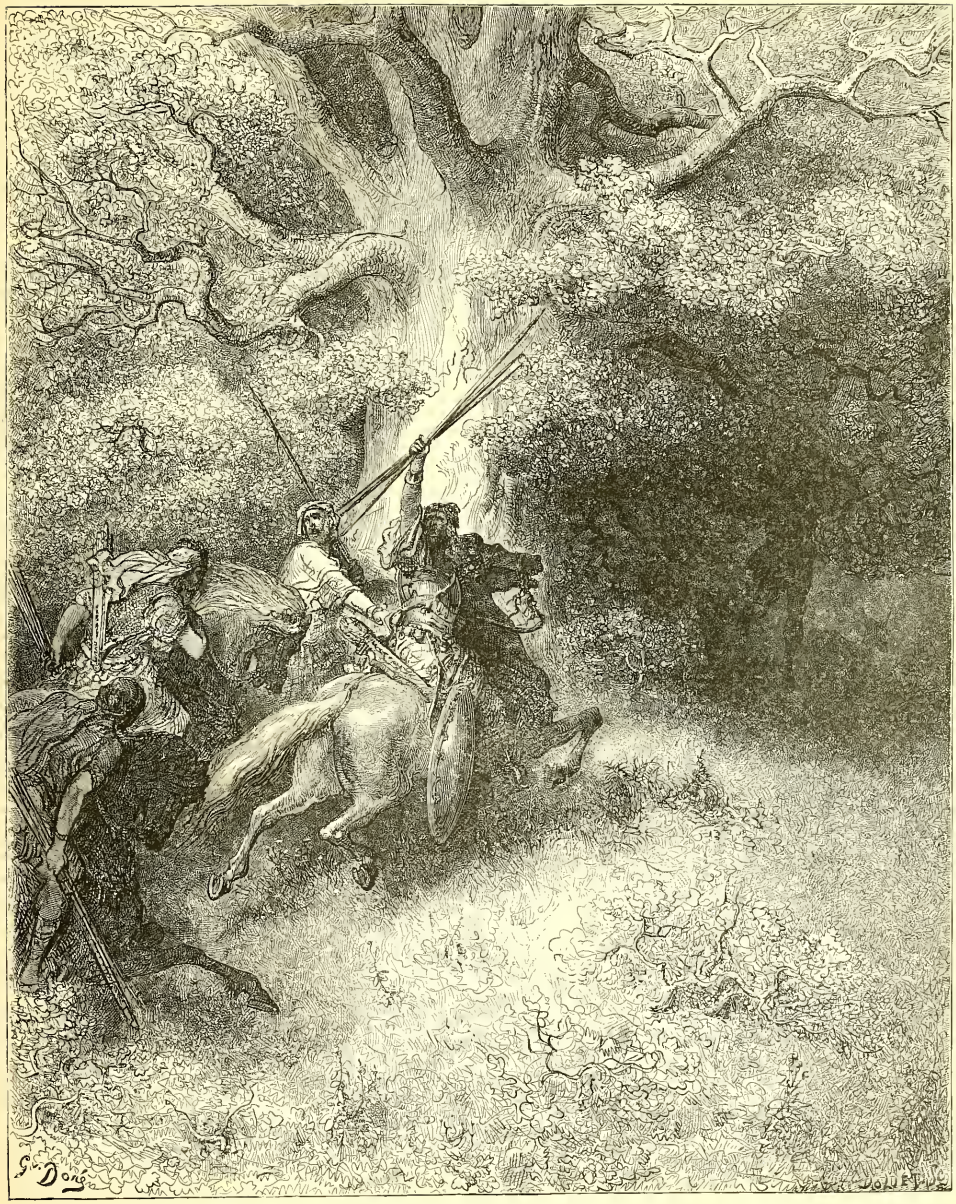
DEATH OF SAUL.

THE DEATH OF ABSALOM.

2 SAMUEL XVIII.

THE third son of David reminds every reader of the handsome, dissolute, and unprincipled Alcibiades of Greek history. Absalom was highly favored in every way, yet came to a shameful end. In personal appearance he was the very flower and pride of the whole nation. "In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." In addition to this he had a pleasing address, quick perception, and decided force of will. Offended at his father for severity of treatment for his own misconduct, and animated by a criminal ambition, he determined to seize the crown. To this end he practiced all the arts of an accomplished demagogue, courting the favor of the people and undermining the authority of the king. At length, after years of preparation, he set up his standard in Hebron, won to his side David's confidential counselor, the wise Ahithophel, and gathered his adherents from all quarters. When the news of this formidable revolt came to the ears of the king, he fled from his capital in haste and distress, and made good his escape to Mahanaim, beyond Jordan.

Absalom, meanwhile, entered Jerusalem in triumph, and assumed all royal rights, some of them in a very offensive manner. He was, however, cunningly induced, by a secret friend of David, not to pursue his father at once and end the contest by a decided stroke, but to wait until all his troops were gathered. This delay gave David opportunity to collect his friends and make a firm stand for his crown, so that when Absalom crossed the Jordan there was a large and well-appointed force to meet him. This force was committed to three trusted leaders, with the command to deal gently with Absalom. Battle was joined in the wood of Ephraim, and David's troops were successful. Absalom sought to escape by flight, but in the effort came to his death in the singular method shown in the illustration. As he rode through the wood he was caught by the head—possibly entangled by his long hair—in the boughs of an overhanging tree, and his mule passed from under him. In this position he was found by Joab, who, forming a circle of his ten attendants around the tree, pierced his heart with three darts. His body was then thrown into a huge pit and covered with a heap of stones, like those which used to be formed over the graves of grievous malefactors. And this was the shameful end and dishonored grave of a king's son, the best-looking and most popular man of his generation; this the deserved recompense of bitter revenge, boundless self-will, and filial ingratitude.



THE DEATH OF ABSALOM.

DAVID MOURNING OVER ABSALOM.

2 SAMUEL XVIII.

WHILE the battle in the wood of Ephraim was going on, David remained in the place where he had parted from his troops in the morning. All day long he waited for intelligence; and as he sat watching, his throne, his people, his life, were all forgotten in his eager concern for Absalom. To each messenger that comes he puts the same inquiry, "Is the young man safe?" And when the sad truth comes out, he forgets his own deliverance, forgets gratitude, submission, and faith, and goes up to his chamber with a great and exceeding bitter cry, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The clasped hands of the central figure in the picture, and the averted face, well express the father's agony, at which the attendants gaze in consternation. David's passionate burst of grief had ample reason. When Bathsheba's infant died he could say, "I shall go to him," but no such assurance is possible here. Absalom's sun had gone down in thickest darkness. To his father there remained a bitter remembrance—a life-long sorrow. How many fathers since have, by a foolish indulgence of their children, or by an unreasonable rigor, laid up for themselves an equal and remediless grief!

DAVID MOURNING OVER ABSALOM.

SOLOMON.

This imposing figure represents the wisest of men in the ripe maturity of his days. He excelled all that went before him, as well as all that came after him, in riches, honor, and power. His peaceful empire extended from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates, and he held a port at the head of the Red Sea, whence there was extensive commerce to the east and to the west. These wide territories brought in an ample revenue, so that the precious metals and sparkling gems abounded on every hand. This led to a display which became proverbial. Our Saviour uses the phrase, "Solomon in all his glory," as a term of comparison, for there was none more expressive. Solomon's buildings, his court, his porch, his throne, his banquets, his gardens, his chariots, even his stables, were all on the most magnificent scale.

But the artist, in the picture before us, seems to leave all these external things out of view. Nothing indicates them save, perhaps, the columns and the architrave of the apartment where the king sits. But the roll in one hand, and the pen, or stylus, in the other, bring up to view the extensive authorship ascribed to him. Songs, proverbs, and treatises came from his fruitful genius in abundance; and what is preserved in the canonical Scriptures is only a portion of the literature he produced.

SOLOMON.

THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

1 KINGS III.

In Solomon's youth the Lord appeared to him in a dream by night, and bade him ask what God should give him. The young monarch said, "Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" One would think that he must have been already very wise to make such a choice. The Lord assured him that his request was granted, and at an early period he had a proof of it in the extraordinary scene exhibited in this picture. Two mothers came before him with a dead child and a living one, each claiming that the living child was hers and the dead one the other's.

"Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was, unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment."

The artist has conveyed very justly the sentiment of the occasion. The youthful king, in his official robes, stands, with uplifted hand, announcing his wise decision—a keen-sighted appeal to the instincts of nature. The executioner, with drawn sword in one hand and the living child in the other, has his face turned to the monarch as if seeking to know whether the decision is final. The false mother stands by, indifferent, or rather well-pleased, at the result; but the other feels the yearnings of her maternal heart, and falls down imploringly, expressing in every line of the figure anxious desire.

There is an oriental tradition that Solomon once peaceably adjudicated between two claimants to the same treasure by determining that the son of the one should marry the daughter of the other. But this story falls far short of the one described in the picture.

THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

THE CEDARS DESTINED FOR THE TEMPLE.

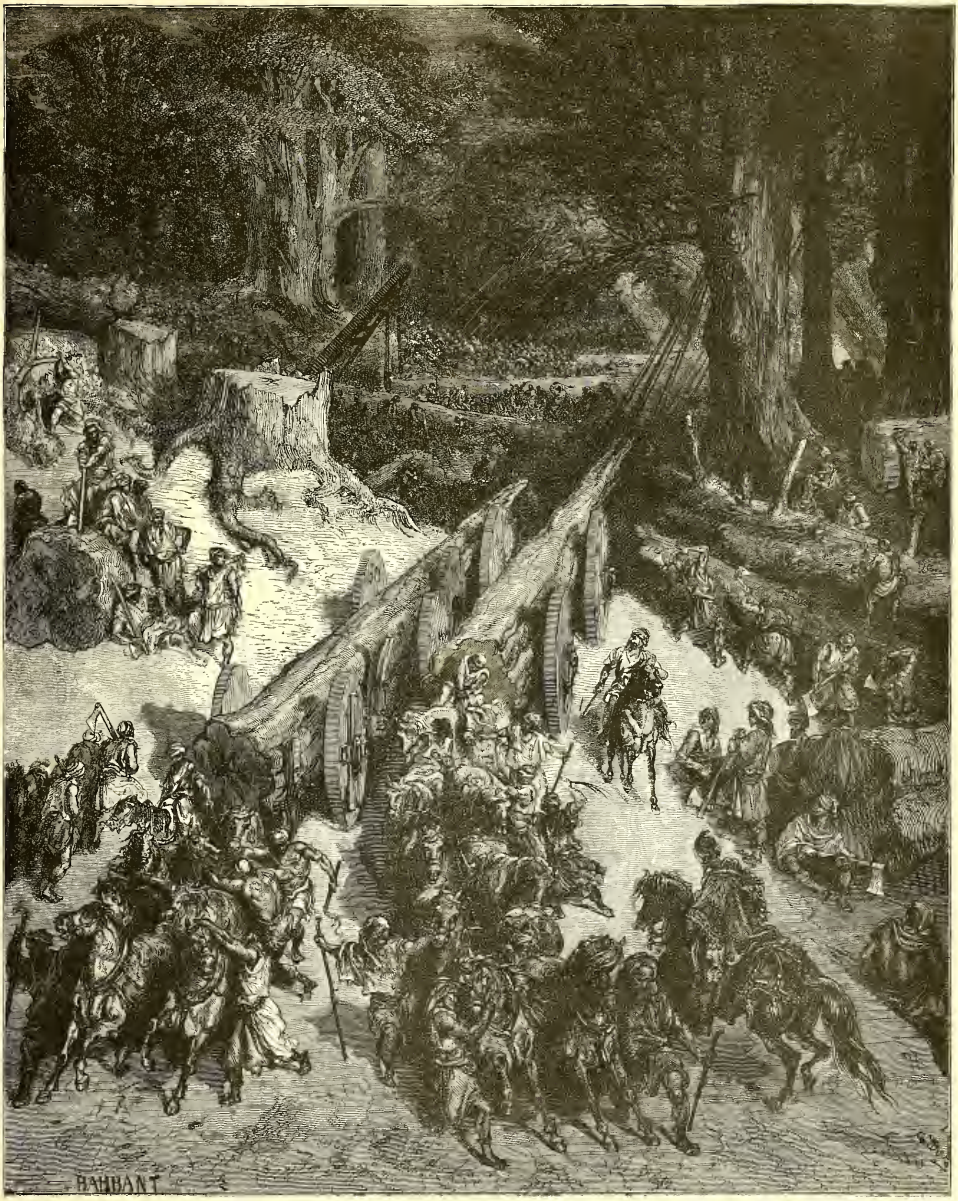
1 KINGS V.

In the magnificent Hymn of Creation, the 104th Psalm, the writer, among the specific illustrations of divine wisdom and power, cites the trees of the forest. Of these he selects a single species as pre-eminent:

> "The trees of the Lord are satisfied (with moisture),
> The cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted."

The reasons of the selection are not far to seek. No other tree of Palestine is so large and stately and durable and variously useful. Besides being an ornament to any landscape, the cedar could be fashioned into the mast of a ship, or the beams of a house, or the ceiling of a temple, or a coffer for merchandise. It was the wood chiefly employed in the construction of the first temple and the second; in both cases obtained from the Tyrians, by whom it was floated down to Joppa, and thence carried overland to Jerusalem. And when Herod made those repairs and enlargements which were almost equivalent to a third temple, the stone he used was white marble, but the wood was cedar, from the forests of Lebanon. And to-day the modern visitor to the Haram, at Jerusalem, as he walks down the nave of the Church of the Virgin, long since converted by Mohammedans into the Mosque of El Aksa, sees overhead a carved ceiling of red wood which had the same origin.

Formerly cedars existed in great abundance, and vast forests covered the sides of the twin ranges of Lebanon, but these have long since disappeared. Still there are found, in different places, groves to the number of a dozen or more. One of these, on the western slope of Lebanon, technically known as "The Cedars," is always visited by travelers, as, indeed, it deserves to be, in view of the number of the trees, their enormous size, and their extreme antiquity. One who has seen them finds the sketch in the illustration very life-like. The varied groups of busy workmen give great animation to the scene. Some are drawing down with ropes gigantic trunks, which have been sawn through near the ground. Others are hewing and trimming those which lie prostrate. In the foreground two wains, with large, awkward wheels, are loaded with huge trees and drawn by long trains of horses, which the drivers are guiding as circumstances require, while the mounted inspectors are giving their orders, and groups of laborers are watching the progress of the work. The picture is crowded with figures, but not confused, and it represents what must have occurred time and again in the forest slopes of the White Mountain, Lebanon.



THE CEDARS DESTINED FOR THE TEMPLE.

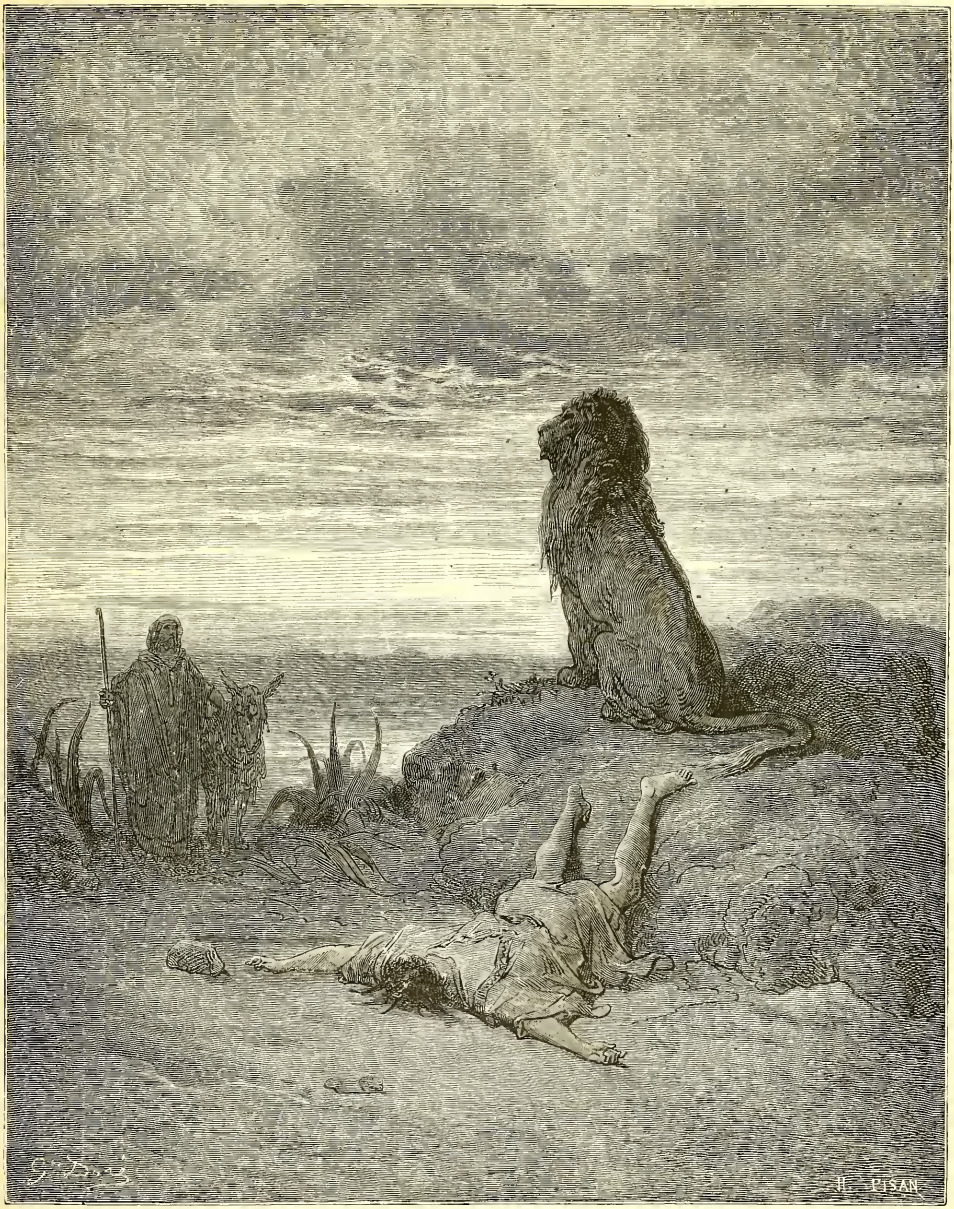
THE PROPHET SLAIN BY A LION.

1 KINGS XIII.

THE incident to which this picture refers is a part of the first prophetic protest made against the idolatrous worship instituted by Jeroboam, at Bethel. While the king, in his royal state, was offering incense on the altar he had erected to the golden calf, there suddenly rose before him a prophet to whom the sacred book gives no name. He had come from Judah for this special purpose. He was not to receive hospitality, going or returning. He was not even to address the king, but the altar, the dumb monument of division and sin. "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord." What the Lord said was that the priests of this altar should one day be offered upon it by a child of the house of Judah. The king in anger, with outstretched hand, ordered his arrest; but, behold! his hand withered so that he could not draw it in to him, and he was compelled to ask the prophet to entreat the Lord to restore his hand. The request was complied with and the hand restored. The prophet then, according to his orders, set out at once to return home, without eating or drinking.

But an old prophet residing at Bethel went after him, and, by falsely pretending a divine communication to that effect, persuaded the stranger to return to Bethel, and eat and drink with him. But, while they were sitting at the table, behold the old prophet announced to his visitor a true message from God, that, for his disobedience, he should not be buried in the sepulcher of his fathers. And so it came to pass. As he journeyed a lion met him and slew him, and then stood by the carcass, just as the illustration represents, only the artist has neglected to put the ass in. The narrative states that the lion waited quietly, disturbing neither the ass nor any that passed by the way. He did the work he was appointed to do, and that only, nor did he hinder the old prophet when he came and took up the body to carry it to the city for burial.

Thus was emphasized, in a most remarkable way, the prediction against the altar at Bethel. If God was so prompt and severe against his own chosen servants when they disobeyed his commands, how much more would he be against those whose apostasy was open and manifold, establishing an idolatrous worship of the most debased and debasing character, and violating both the letter and spirit of the command which was thundered from Sinai and written on a tablet of stone by the finger of God?



THE PROPHET SLAIN BY A LION.

ELIJAH DESTROYING THE MESSENGERS OF AHAZIAH.

2 KINGS I.

It is related in the Gospel of Luke (ix. 51–56) that on a certain occasion, when the Lord Jesus, on his way from Galilee to Jerusalem, desired to pass through a village of the Samaritans, he was refused permission, whereupon James and John asked if he wished them to call down fire from heaven upon these offenders, even as Elijah did. But he rebuked them. His mission was not to destroy, but to save. Forbearance belonged to his present course, judgment being reserved for the future. The case to which the impetuous disciples referred was the one set forth in this picture.

King Ahaziah, having sent messengers to consult a Philistine deity whether he should recover from a disease which afflicted him, was surprised by their sudden return. They had met a man who sent them back with a rebuke and an ominous message. The king, on learning the description of the strange apparition, perceived that it could be only Elijah, the Tishbite, the prophet of whom he had heard from his father and his grandfather. So he sent to arrest him. Troop after troop came against the solitary man, but in vain. The captain of each successive fifty summoned him to descend and accompany them to the king, but the simple answer was, "If I be a man of God [as you call me and yet seek to lay violent hands upon me], let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." Even as the prophet spake the heavens opened and down came the fiery shower. There was no delay, and no escape. The confused forms of horses and men, in the illustration, well express the wild dismay which must have seized the troops when overtaken by the bolt from heaven. Twice was the terrible infliction sent, before the soldiers learned the folly of contending with God or his commissioned messengers. And in each case the destruction was instantaneous and total.

Such a procedure belonged to the old dispensation, and to the times and character of Elijah. He was a messenger of rebuke and repentance. It was his duty to sound the alarm and display the fact of retribution. But the Gospel is neither in the hurricane, nor the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still, small voice. It does speak of wrath—even that most terrible of all things, the wrath of the Lamb—but this is in the future. For the present its accents are all of love and mercy, and it woos men by invitations and promises, and God's sun shines and his rain descends upon the evil and the good, the just and the unjust.

ELIJAH DESTROYING THE MESSENGERS OF AHAZIAH.

ELIJAH'S ASCENT IN A CHARIOT OF FIRE.

2 KINGS II.

JESUS, the son of Sirach, said of Elijah that "he rose up as a fire, and his word blazed as a torch"—words finely descriptive of his vehement nature and brilliant career. He was the burning and shining light of the old dispensation. For intense action and concentrated energy there is none like him. Single-handed he confronted king and queen, a court and a nation. He was subject to like passions as we are, yet, when he prayed, it rained not for three years and six months, and, when he prayed again, the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit (James v. 17, 18). At his call fire came down upon Carmel and consumed a sacrifice soaked in water; and afterward, when armed bands sought to lay hands upon him, once and again his call brought forth from the skies fiery thunderbolts which consumed them all. When the Lord revealed himself to him in the awful solitudes of Sinai, one of the displays was a devouring fire like that which enveloped the mount in the day the law was given. It was fitting that a course so peculiar and wondrous should have a termination of the like sort. And it had.

The narrative of the sacred historian is simple but effective. Elijah and Elisha were walking on the road beyond the Jordan, when suddenly there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. This is the scene the artist has essayed to represent: the sweeping clouds, the winged horses, the prophet with outstretched hand, and Elisha fallen in amazement at the thrilling spectacle. And so the heroic man disappeared from earth. Like Enoch, he was not, for God took him. This translation was the completion and crown of the heroic and saintly life which had preceded it. Yet a thousand years after his entrance into heaven he once more appeared on earth. In the brilliant transfiguration of our Lord, he, with Moses, comes to meet him and converse respecting the decease he was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 30). As the great lawgiver, so the great representative of the prophets comes forth to do honor to the well-beloved Son of God.

ELIJAH'S ASCENT IN A CHARIOT OF FIRE.

THE DEATH OF JEZEBEL.

2 KINGS IX.

THE principal antagonist of Elijah was Ahab, who not only continued the calf-worship in Israel, but excelled all his predecessors in sin by enthroning Baal and Ashtoreth, Phœnician deities, in place of Jehovah. In this deliberate apostasy he was seconded, or rather prompted, by his wife Jezebel, a Tyrian princess, who appears to have been to him what Clytemnestra was to Ægisthus, or Lady Macbeth to her husband. Ahab had some scruples remaining, and was of feebler will than desire, but Jezebel was bold and unrelenting. She derided the weakness of her husband, and cared nothing for perjury or murder to secure her ends. But after she had put Ahab in possession of the dearly-gained vineyard of Naboth, the prophet declared "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel." Nothing seemed more unlikely to be accomplished. Yet when Jehu, after slaying her son, drove up to Jezreel, and was addressed by the queen-mother from one of the windows of the palace, he called upon her attendants to throw her down. He was obeyed, as is represented in the spirited illustration. She was cast forth, and, after being trampled under the horses' hoofs, was devoured by the wild dogs, which are seen in the bottom of the picture, waiting to tear her in pieces. A bold, bad woman came to a fearful but merited end.

DEATH OF JEZEBEL.

ESTHER CONFOUNDING HAMAN.

ESTHER VIII.

MARTIN LUTHER once said that he wished that neither Esther nor her book had ever existed, and similar opinions have been uttered by others in later times. They object to its exclusiveness, its spirit of revenge, its omission of the name of God, and the earthly plane on which its whole action moves. But it is certain, as has often been said, that if the name of God is not there, his finger is. The dullest reader who connects together the quarrel of Ahasuerus, the sleepless night, and the long delay of the lot, is compelled to recognize in the final result the work of a divine Providence, and perhaps the more distinctly just because it is not thrust upon his attention. So far as its exclusiveness is concerned, that belongs to the period when the facts occurred. And the revengeful feeling shown is a pattern of what is to be avoided rather than imitated.

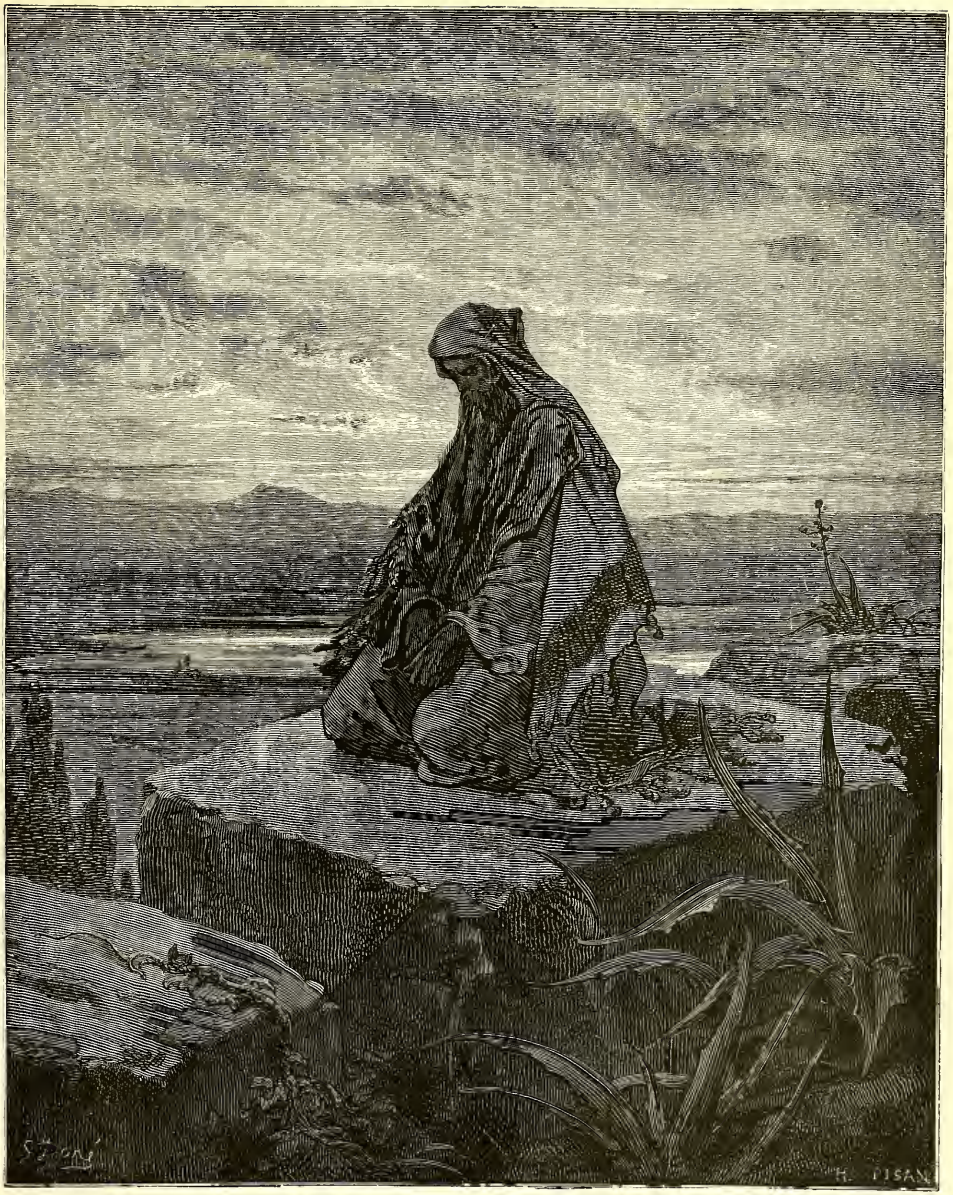
Moreover, there is much to kindle and stimulate in the course of the central figure of the story, her that was "glorified by the genius of Handel, and sanctified by the piety of Racine." What a lofty patriotism she showed! What a generous self-sacrifice in the words, "I will go in unto the king, and if I perish, I perish!" And what courage, in attacking, as she did, the king's favorite! The artist has exaggerated nothing in the splendor of the architecture, the spirited pose of Esther, the kindling wrath of the king, and the downcast air of the wretched Haman.

ESTHER CONFOUNDING HAMAN

ISAIAH.

THIS is the greatest of the prophets of speech, as Elijah is of those of action. His utterances are greater in number than those of any other, and excel as much in quality as in quantity. This was owing, in part, to the length of his life, the height of his social position, and the period in which he appeared, but mainly to his own magnificent genius. His oracles take in all forms of prophetic expression, and are great in all. Whether it is mere narrative, or vivid description, or didactic reasoning, or impassioned appeal, or direct invective, or tender entreaty, that employs his pen, the result is the same. Everything bears the stamp of a great and original mind. His frequent references to the great future Deliverer are so many as to have acquired for him the name of "the Evangelical Prophet," and have rendered his book almost as dear and as familiar to Christians as the Psalter. No other inspired writer has so set forth the glory of the triumphant Messiah, whose name is called "Wonderful;" no other has given, with such melting pathos, the experience of the suffering Messiah, whom it pleased the Lord to bruise. The two sides of the picture put together make the most marvelous combination the earth has ever seen.

In the illustration Isaiah kneels on a naked rock, rapt in devout meditation. There stretches before him a wide sweep of vale and upland, of bright skies reflected in waters beneath, but he neither sees nor hears anything but the voice of the Lord speaking in the quiet communion.



ISAIAH.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB'S HOST.

2 KINGS XIX.

THE picture represents a fearful overthrow wrought by an angelic being. The awful occurrence is related both by the prophet Isaiah and by the author of the Book of Kings. Sennacherib was threatening the destruction of Jerusalem, and had used insulting words respecting the God of Israel. In answer to the prayer of Hezekiah, the Lord gave assurance of complete and speedy deliverance. This was wrought by the destruction of the invading foe. "The angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand." This was all done in a single night. It was not, therefore, a nocturnal attack by human foes, nor a terrible storm, nor a pestilence, nor a simoom of the desert, as learned men have imagined, but a direct visitation of God, like that which in one night slew all the first-born in Egypt. There was no disturbance, no alarm. The entire host at night-fall were in their usual health, and in the morning were all corpses. The Assyrian monuments contain no reference to this event, for men do not take pains to record their defeats; but Herodotus learned in Egypt from the records of that country a story of Assyrian discomfiture which, under some disguise, resembles in several particulars the Scripture narrative.

The artist admirably depicts the confusion, the wild dismay of the host as they lie prostrate beneath the avenging arm of the messenger of the skies. But the scene has been vividly described in the well-known stanzas of Byron:

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

"Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host, with their banners, at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host, on the morrow, lay wither'd and strown.

"For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!"

DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB'S HOST.

BARUCH.

JEREMIAH XXXVI., XLV.

THIS name is well known as the title of a book in the Old Testament Apocrypha, a compilation after the manner of the Hebrew prophets, and also as attached to a spurious Apocalypse written some time in the course of the first century A. D. But it really belongs to an historical personage of some note in canonical Scripture. He was of a distinguished family, and very well informed, as we learn from Josephus; and his brother, Seraiah, held an honorable position in the court of Zedekiah, Judah's last king (Jerem. li. 59). But the chief interest now taken in Baruch springs from his close and confidential relations with Jeremiah, to whom he stood in the same intimacy as Elisha with Elijah, or Timothy with Paul. It was his office to receive and record the disclosures of the divine will, made by the mouth of the weeping prophet, and also to be a medium of communication between him and the king and nobles of the land. He shared, too, his imprisonment until the fall of the city, and afterward was compelled with him to go into Egypt. As to what followed this removal, the same impenetrable obscurity rests upon the fate of master and scholar.

The artist represents him, in the illustration, as reclining amid the bare walls of a prison, and surrounded by the precious rolls on which it had been his privilege to inscribe the words of God. He seems rapt in meditation, and his countenance has a sad and careworn expression. He may be musing on the high hopes he once cherished for himself, and their total disappointment. For the divine utterance to him is still on record, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."

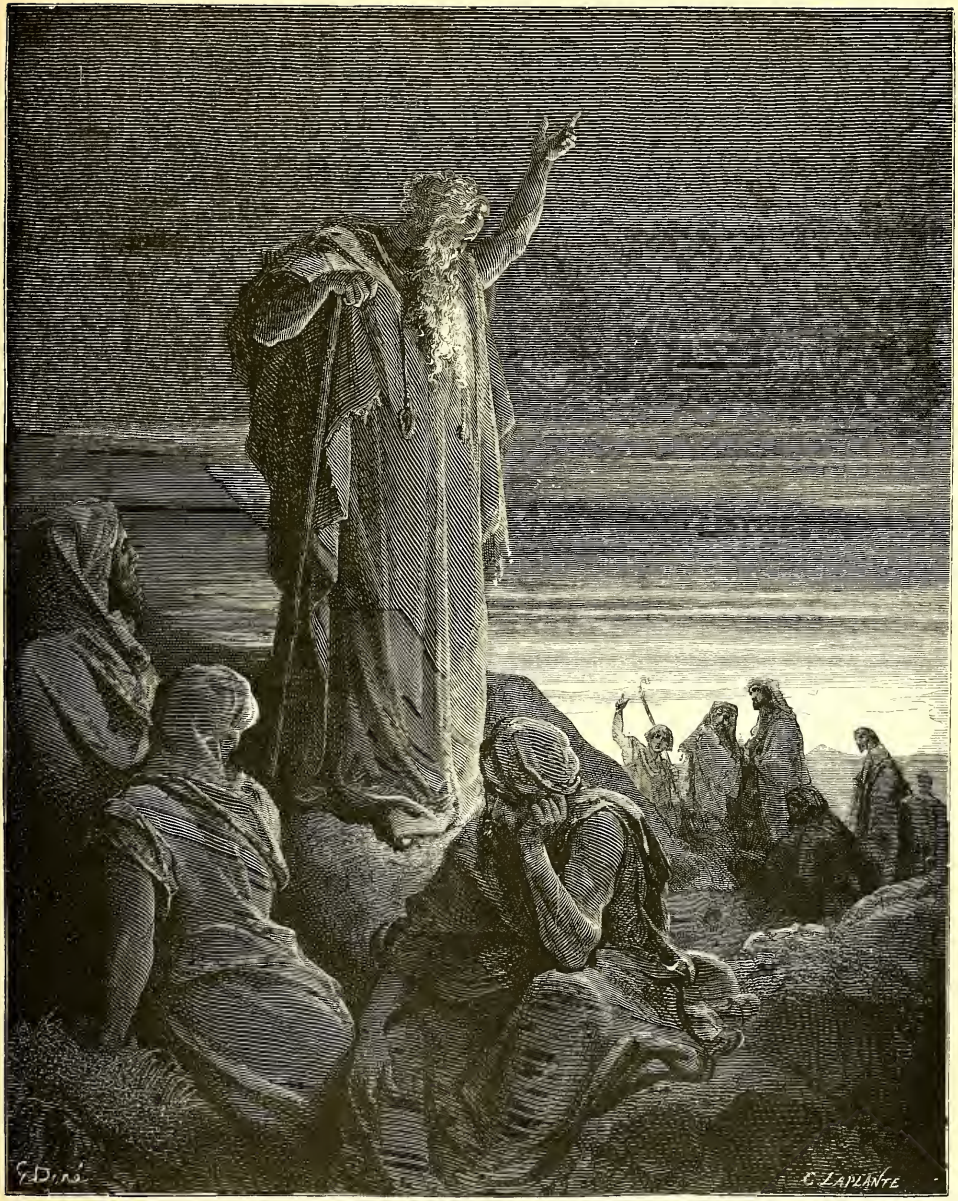
BARUCH.

EZEKIEL PROPHESYING.

EZEKIEL II., III.

This prophet, like Jeremiah, was also a priest, and, like him, was sent to a gainsaying people. His name denotes "the strength of God," and is very appropriate to one who, among the prophets, is what Michael Angelo was among painters and sculptors. His imagery is colossal, like that of one who had wandered through the vast halls of the Assyrian palaces. It seizes the singular emblems of human dignity and brute strength combined—the eagle-winged lion, the human-headed bull—and weaves them into strange and complicated forms with mystic wheels, and amber fire, and rainbow brightness. When they move, it is with the speed of the lightning's flash, and with the sound of rolling thunder or the din of an army. Countless eyes indicate boundless intelligence, and the sapphire throne which crowns the whole aptly suggests its awful and mysterious occupant in whose name Ezekiel speaks.

The prophet needed to be reinforced by such a gigantic vision. He came to speak to unwilling ears. His countrymen threw the blame of their exile upon God, and not upon themselves. They were "hard of face and stiff of heart;" hardened, rather than softened, by the bitter experiences of the Captivity, and wholly averse to the penitence indispensable to the restoration of God's favor. This is well shown in the illustration. Ezekiel stands in the midst, with solemn earnestness shown in every trait; but the hearers seem listless, or attending rather with mere curiosity than any deep moral interest. But his message is to speak, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."



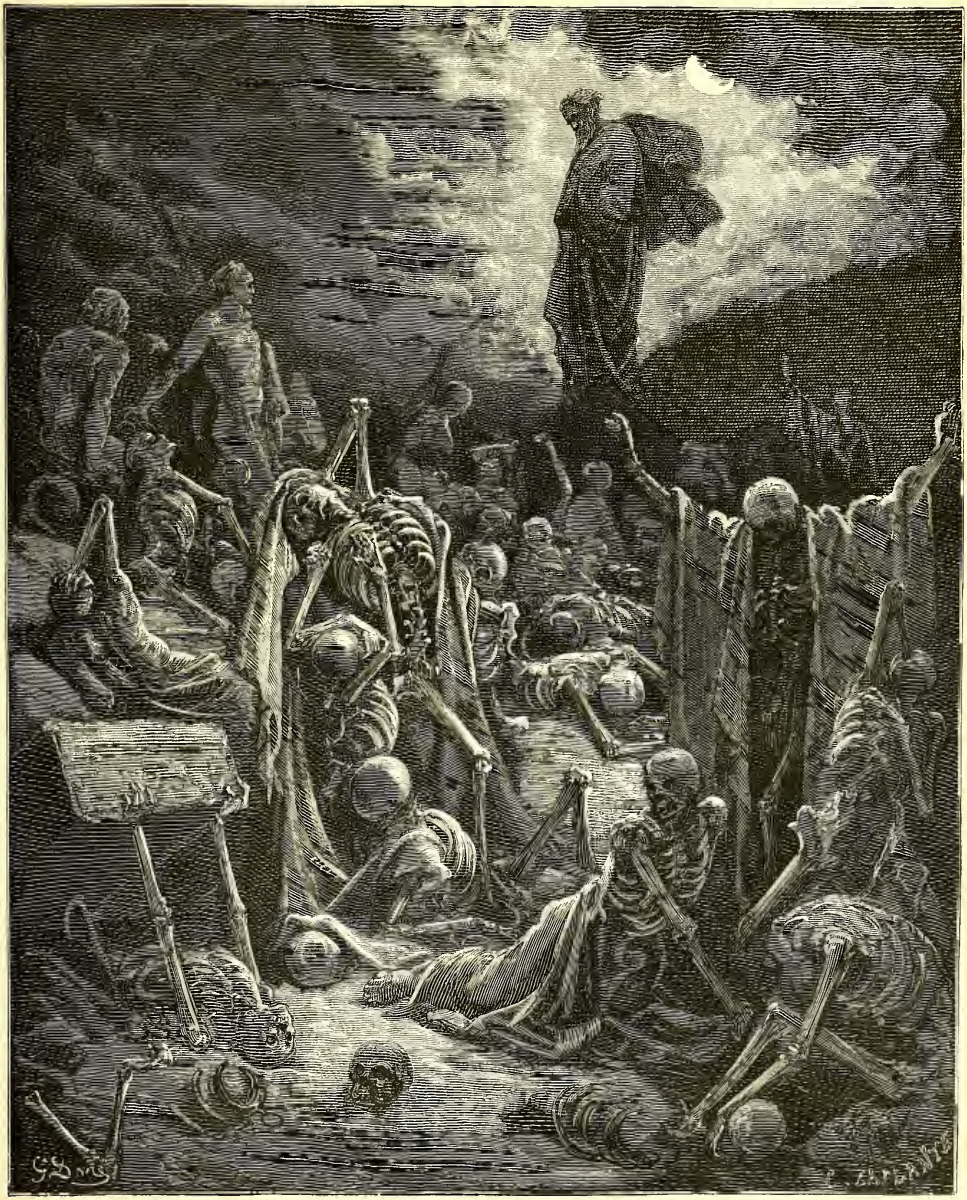
EZEKIEL PROPHESYING.

THE VISION OF EZEKIEL.

EZEKIEL XXXVII

MANY grand and impressive visions were vouchsafed to Ezekiel, but none so thrilling as that which is here represented. The Spirit of the Lord had taken Ezekiel and set him down in the open valley—a stretch of desert where a huge caravan had left its skeletons of man and beast to bleach upon the yellow sands, or a vast battlefield where thousands and tens of thousands had been slain, and none left to bury them. Round these lifeless relics the prophet was told to walk to and fro, and, as he walked, to bid them live and hear the word of the Lord. They were very many and very dry, but Ezekiel prophesied as he had been commanded, and as his voice sounded through the desert air, there was a peal as of thunder, the earth shook beneath his feet, and, behold! the bones came together, the sinews and the flesh crept over them, and a new skin covered the whole. Here they were, complete in form, but every hand stiff, every eye glazed, every tongue cold and silent—a vast field of unburied corpses. The scene was hardly less dismal and revolting than it was before. But again Ezekiel received the command to prophesy and say, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!" He obeyed, and once more the word was efficacious. Vital breath entered into these lifeless forms. One after another they arose and stood upon their feet, until there was an exceeding great army. The picture represents all the steps in this wondrous revolution. Dry and disjointed bones lie scattered in the foreground; behind them are moving skeletons, while, in the rear, are some in whom the process is complete, and who stand gazing at the source of this wondrous transformation, while on a height stands the prophet, contemplating the vision.

The meaning of the whole is clear. The bones in the valley were no unfitting emblem of the race of Israel, scattered, divided from each other, and, as a nation, to all appearance hopelessly lost. But a day was coming when the grave of their captivity would be opened, when the skeleton of Judaism would come forth and feel the breath of the Divine Spirit, and be again clothed with fresh and living beauty. What took place in the valley was a type of the future. Yet this could hardly be without suggesting the possibility of a literal resurrection of the body. The power which turned dry bones into animated beings, could do the same with moldering dust; and this passage must be counted with those of other prophets, which made the general resurrection an accepted truth in the days of our Lord's flesh.



THE VISION OF EZEKIEL.

DANIEL.

DANIEL X.

UNDER one of the early Pharaohs Joseph became Prime Minister of Egypt, and recently a man of Jewish descent held the same office in the court of Queen Victoria. Between these there was a long succession of Israelites, who, by the singular gifts of their race, at various intervals mounted to the highest places of Oriental or European states. Prominent among these is one whose life covered the whole period of the exile, and who was called, by Gabriel, "greatly beloved of God." To many English readers he is best known by the exclamation in the Merchant of Venice, "a Daniel come to judgment," borrowed, doubtless, from the Apocryphal story of Susanna; but although he is spoken of as one from whose transcendent wisdom nothing could be hid (Ezekiel xxviii. 3), his name and fame rest upon other grounds. His character seems to have been a complete and consistent whole from his youth up. He was a man of habitual prayer, of firm faith, of unshaken constancy; the same in adversity and in prosperity. His rectitude of conduct was so entire that envious foes could find no matter of accusation against him, save in the matter of his religion. His great gifts from God did not turn his head; his high position at court did not render him proud.

The illustration represents him by the side of the great river, where he received the chief later visions recorded in the book that bears his name. His attitude is simple but appropriate, as expressing deep seriousness and thoughtful meditation.

DANIEL.

THE FIERY FURNACE.

DANIEL III.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of certain heroes of old who by their faith "quenched the violence of fire" (xi. 34). This illustration furnishes an instance. Nebuchadnezzar had erected a vast image of gold, to which all his subjects without exception were required to bow down, under penalty of being cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. The great body of the citizens consented, but there were three companions of Daniel who deliberately refused to obey. When the monarch heard of this he cited them before him, renewing the command under the same penalty. The answer of the young men has become classic, as an example of modest firmness and intrepidity. "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image thou hast set up." But these words only filled him with rage, and he commanded them to be at once flung into the fire. The sort of furnace here intended cannot certainly be known. As its intensity could be increased by the employment of certain means not here specified, it would seem to have been inclosed in some way. As four persons could walk to and fro in it, it must have been of immense size; and as these persons could be seen in it by spectators who were far enough away to be beyond the reach of harm from it, it must have been so placed as to be open to the inspection of persons at a distance.

In this way the illustration has conceived the case. The king and his counselors, from above, see the wondrous fact that, instead of being consumed, these Jews move about at their ease. The artist has omitted one characteristic feature of the Scripture. The young men are not alone, but a fourth form is there, with an aspect so heavenly that he seemed "like a son of the gods," *i. e.*, something divine. It may very well have been the Angel of the Covenant, who afterward became incarnate in the person of Christ, although, however probable such a theophany, it cannot be proved. The result was that the monarch called the courageous men, the servants of the most high God, to come forth. They obeyed him, and behold! they came forth unharmed, for the fire had no power over their bodies, "nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor had the smell of fire passed upon them." Their victory was absolute and complete. Their faith had quenched the violence of fire.

THE FIERY FURNACE.

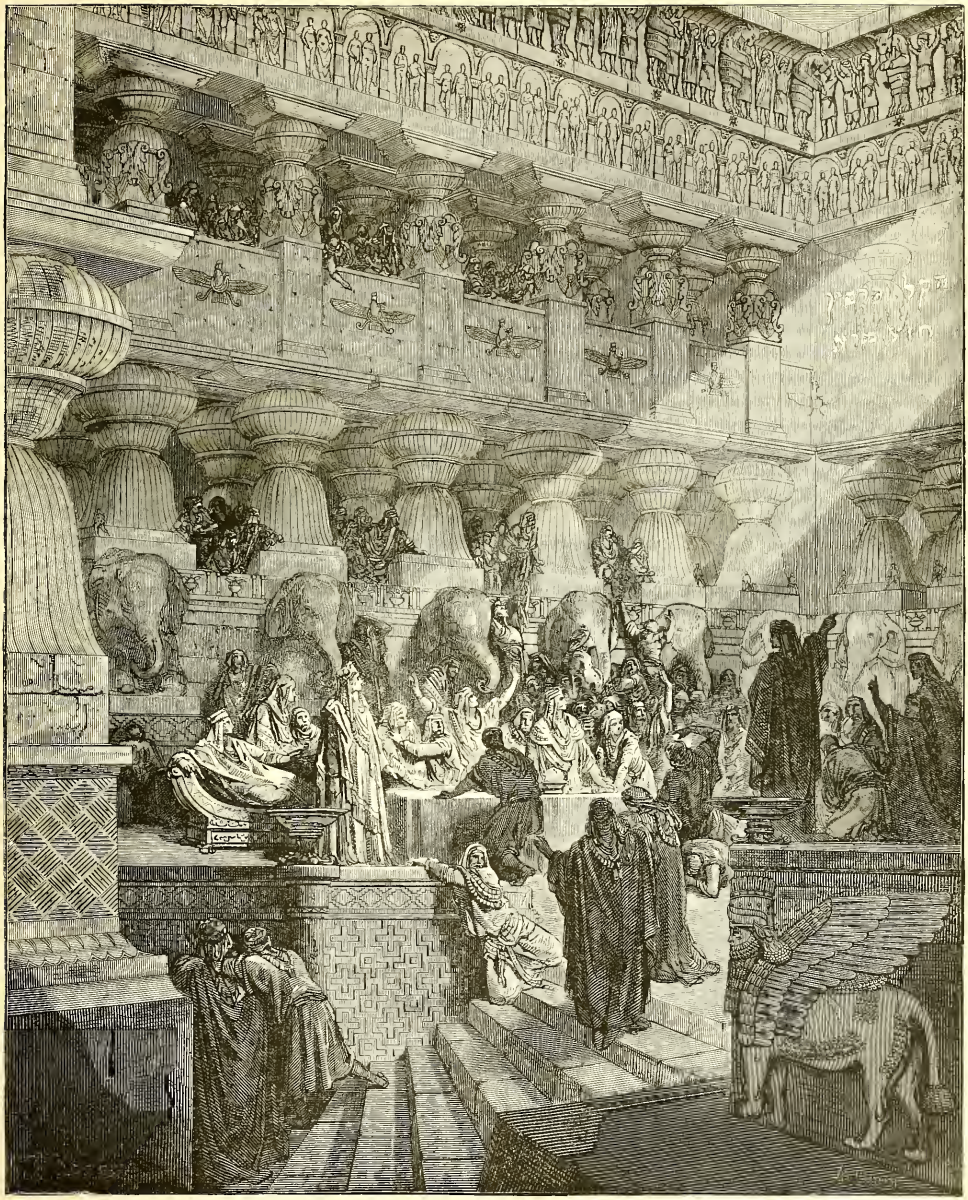
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

DANIEL V.

THE existence of Belshazzar was once asserted to be a mere myth, since profane history made Nabonidus the last king of Babylon; and the authority of Daniel was impeached and derided. But, in 1854, Sir Henry Rawlinson read on a cylinder of Nabonidus the statement that he had associated his eldest son Belshazzar with him upon the throne, during the latter part of his reign. This vindicated the Scripture narrative, and explained exactly how Daniel, who was made next to the acting king, should be called "*third* ruler in the kingdom." This discovery from the Assyrian monuments goes far to sustain the position that adequate information would explain all the other apparent inconsistencies between the Scripture and the words of credible secular historians.

This last king of Babylon was celebrating a profane, riotous feast, which met with an extraordinary interruption. Surrounded by his lords, and his wives, and his concubines, he was not satisfied with the usual revelry, but must needs give a zest to the entertainment by sending for the sacred vessels brought by his grandfather from Jerusalem, in order that what had been used only for solemn worship might be made the instruments of a drunken revel. But, in the midst of the boisterous mirth, there was a sudden pause. "The king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." The reason was, the fingers of a man's hand came forth and wrote mysterious characters upon the wall. Nobody understood the writing or its meaning, but why should the king be alarmed? It might be of good as well as of evil omen. His conscience determined its character. Engaged as he was, at the time, at a profane, dissolute banquet, there could be only one explanation of its general tenor. It spoke of doom dark and deadly; but this conviction only intensified the monarch's desire to have a fuller disclosure of its intent. In vain he asked his wise men. The secret baffled their power. Then the queen suggested that he summon the Hebrew Daniel, which he did. And Daniel gave the explanation, prefacing it with a solemn warning.

It is this scene which the artist sets forth. The company are assembled in a stately hall marked with the well-known features of Assyrian architecture. The guests are gazing in astonishment at the mystic message, around which a stream of light pours down upon the hall, while Daniel, with outstretched hand, is explaining its solemn purport. The whole scene has been strikingly depicted in one of the Hebrew melodies of Byron.



BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.

DANIEL VII.

ENVY in the hearts of the princes of Persia led to the scene here portrayed. Displeased at the elevation of a foreigner over them all, they sought means to overthrow him. But so exact and faithful was he in his high office, that no colorable charge could be brought against him. So they persuaded the king to make a decree that for thirty days no one should ask a petition of any god or man save the king, under pain of being cast into the den of lions. This decree effected no change in the religious habits of Daniel. He still prayed toward Jerusalem, according to the words of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, "If they pray unto the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen and the house that I have built for thy name" (1 Kings viii. 44), just as he had been in the habit of doing, and made no attempt at concealment. He knew the risk that he ran, but deliberately chose to obey God rather than man. The case was reported to the king, who was much displeased with himself, and labored hard to release his faithful servant from the snare, but in vain, for "the law of the Medes and Persian altereth not." Once established, even the monarch cannot reverse it. A curious illustration of this fact is found in the survival of a similar custom to our own times. In the former part of this century a Persian king (Aga Mahmed Khan) having, on an expedition, fixed his encampment at a convenient place, published an edict not to remove until the snow should disappear from the neighboring mountains. But the snow was unusually slow in melting, and supplies became scarce. What was he to do? To escape from the difficulty he employed a vast number of men in clearing away the snow that was visible from the camp, and so, at length, was able to keep his edict and put his army in motion. No such escape was open to Darius, and therefore Daniel was cast into the den, which was an excavation walled up at the sides and having a space on the exterior from which the animals could conveniently be seen.

The result is shown in the picture. The king, mortified at his rashness and folly, spent the night sleepless and fasting; but Daniel was as well off as in his own house. The angel of the Lord was with him and shut the lions' mouths, as he told the king in the morning. The courageous and faithful man was vindicated in a marvelous manner, the ferocious wild beasts not harming a hair of his head. His persecutors were consigned to the fate they intended for him. But for them there was no interposition, no invisible power holding in check the lions, but all their bones were broken ere they reached the bottom of the den.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN.

THE PROPHET AMOS.

AMOS I., VII.

SOMEWHERE about 800 B.C., during the long reign of Jeroboam II., the able but unscrupulous monarch under whom the apostate kingdom of Israel attained its highest prosperity, there came forward, to speak in the name of Jehovah, a man who neither by descent nor training belonged to the prophetic order, but was simply one of the herdmen of Tekoah. While he occupied himself with the care of his flocks, the call of the Lord reached him, and the plain countryman bore the divine message even to those who sat in the seat of kings. But while "a child of nature," so to speak, there are no traces of inferiority in style or thought. On the contrary, his shepherd life seems to have been of special service. Nowhere else among the prophets do we find rustic images given with such vividness, and originality, and inexhaustible abundance. Not merely his numerous comparisons, but the minute lines of conception and expression indicate one whose chief familiarity has been with the great picture-book of nature.

Accordingly the illustration exhibits him leaning upon his staff, and rapt in profound meditation, with his form brought into strong relief against a brilliant sky. Around him all is waste and desolate, save the cluster of stunted cactus at the left, while afar off are dimly traced the outlines of a city's walls and towers. The prophet is alone in his silent intercourse with God

THE PROPHET AMOS.

JONAH CALLING NINEVEH TO REPENTANCE.

JONAH III.

THE prophet mentioned here is generally considered to have been contemporary with the one represented on the preceding page, but his mission was widely different. Amos addressed only his countrymen, but Jonah was sent to a heathen people—a fact in which he stands alone in the long line of Jewish prophets. He is prepared for his work in a marvelous way. Fleeing by sea to escape the presence of the Lord and avoid an unwelcome duty, the ship in which he took passage is saved from wreck only by his being cast into the sea. There he is swallowed by a huge fish, and on the third day, having been miraculously preserved, he is vomited upon the dry land. The simple verity of these statements is abundantly established by the explicit teaching of our Lord (Matt. xii. 39–41; xvi. 4), and whoever denies this miracle may just as well deny all the others in Scripture.

Jonah went to Nineveh, the most magnificent of all the capitals of the ancient world, and therefore a fitting representative of the whole. It was very large, the circumference being reckoned by Niebuhr at ninety English miles, while later investigators make it still greater. It included parks, and gardens, and fields, and people, and cattle, within its vast limits. The prophet began to enter it and deliver his message. His utterance was very short but weighty, the one piercing cry, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The artist represents him in the act of speaking before a mixed crowd, who listen with awe and apparent contrition. Opposite the speaker is a huge winged bull with the head of a man, while behind him are stretched out lofty piles of building with finely-carved colonnades rising one above another.

The cry was re-echoed from street to street and square to square, until at last it reached the king on his throne of state. The whole people became convinced of its truth. The previous history of the prophet (Luke xi. 30) was regarded as "a sign"—a miraculous confirmation of his divine mission—and the nation acted accordingly. They interpreted the fact of the announcement as an evidence that the doom might be averted by repentance. Accordingly, they proclaimed a rigid and universal fast, from the king on his throne to the beasts of the stall. Everywhere was sackcloth and ashes—the cry of the penitent, and the endeavor after a new life. The result was that God accepted their repentance and revoked his decree. The ruin of Nineveh was postponed for a century. And so God gave to his people a practical proof that he was the God of the heathen also, and could prepare for himself, even among them, a people for his possession.

JONAH CALLING NINEVEH TO REPENTANCE.

DANIEL CONFOUNDING THE PRIESTS OF BEL.

In the Latin Vulgate the Book of Daniel has a fourteenth chapter, containing the History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon. This is not extant in Hebrew or Chaldee, and has always been rejected by the Jews. Jerome spoke of it as a fable, and the narrative furnishes internal evidence of being a fiction by attributing to Babylon the worship of animals, which never was practiced in that country. The story set forth in the picture runs thus:

"And in that same place was a great dragon, which they of Babylon worshiped. And the king said unto Daniel, Wilt thou also say that this is of brass? Lo, he liveth; he eateth and drinketh; thou canst not say that he is no living god: therefore worship him. Then said Daniel unto the king, I will worship the Lord my God, for he is the living God. But give me leave, O king, and I shall slay this dragon without sword or staff. The king said, I give thee leave. Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof; this he put in the dragon's mouth, and so the dragon burst asunder: and Daniel said, Lo, these are the gods ye worship!"

It is in the act of uttering this triumphant exclamation that the prophet is represented here. The explosion has taken place, demolishing the brazen idol, and the people look on in wondering consternation. The background is occupied with buildings exhibiting the architecture of the time, especially the lofty columns with the peculiar capitals and the Assyrian architrave above.

DANIEL CONFOUNDING THE PRIESTS OF BEL.

HELIODORUS PUNISHED IN THE TEMPLE.

2 MACCABEES III.

HELIODORUS was the treasurer of Seleucus Philopator, and was sent by him to carry away the private treasures deposited, for safe keeping, in the temple at Jerusalem. He accordingly came to the Holy City, and no entreaties of the priests could divert him from his purpose. But as he was about to put it into execution, he was stayed by a great apparition. There appeared a horse with a terrible rider, clad in armor of gold, rushing upon him, while two other young men stood, one on either side, and scourged him with sore stripes. Heliodorus fell suddenly to the ground, "compassed with great darkness," and speechless. He was afterward restored by the intercession of the high-priest, Onias, and, on returning to the king, bore witness of the inviolable majesty of the temple.

The incident has furnished Raphael with the subject of one of his great pictures; but the composition before us is every way worthy of its author. The winged horse, with his avenging rider, is finely drawn, and the figures of the two youths with scourges in their hands, are full of life. The countenance of the fallen leader expresses anguish and terror, and the fleeing forms of his attendants on either side, with the prostrate bodies in the foreground, complete the consternation of the scene.

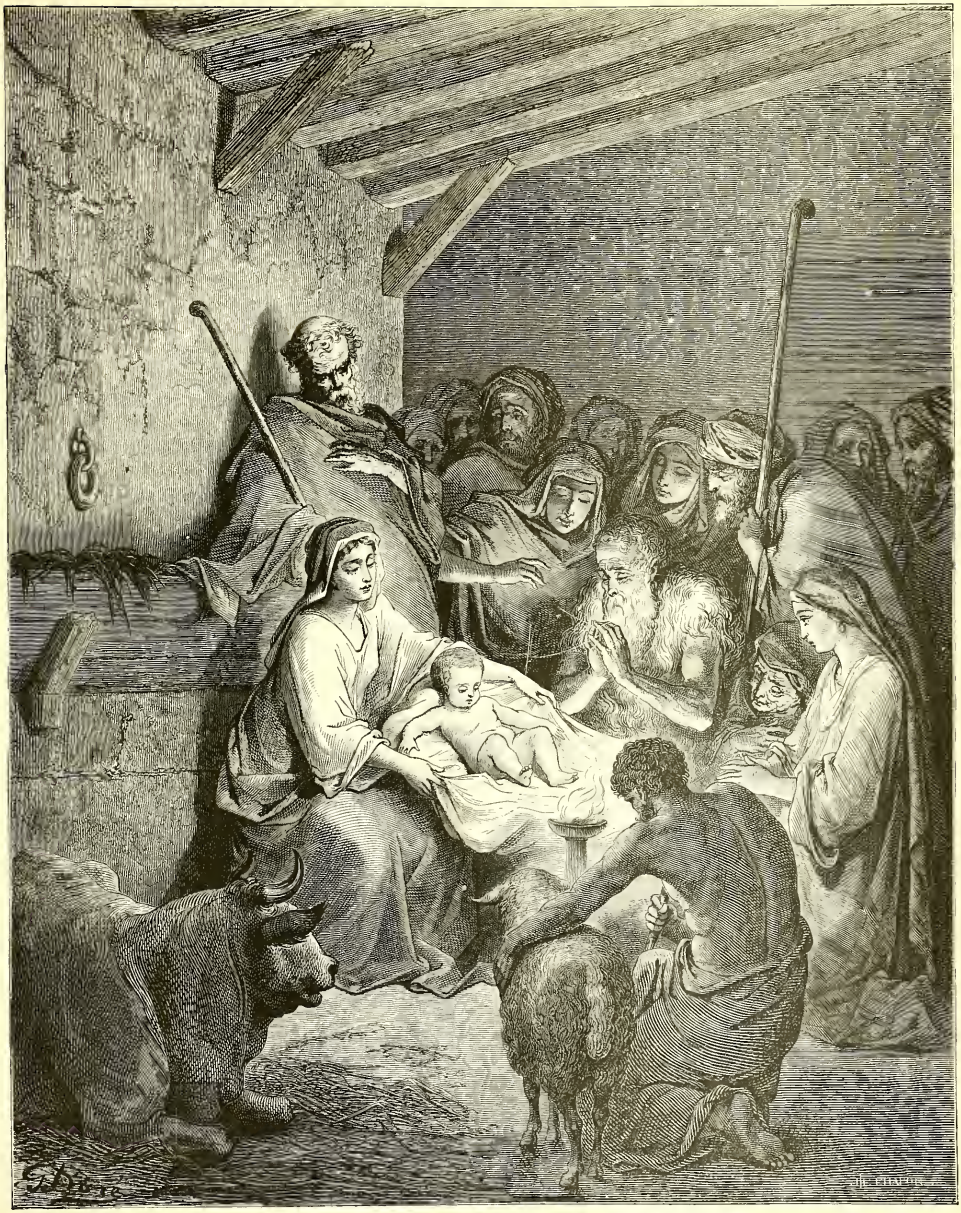
HELIODORUS PUNISHED IN THE TEMPLE.

THE NATIVITY.

LUKE II., 7–20.

A FAMOUS prophecy of Isaiah (ix. 6) begins thus: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God." Another passage of the same prophet speaks of one virgin-born, whose name should be IMMANUEL, *i. e.*, God with us. Thus is announced the transcendent truth of revelation—the Incarnation of the Son of God. Theophanies, that is occasional and temporary appearances of a divine being in human form, had often occurred in the Old Testament. But here is something specifically different: the combination of the divine and human in such a union that, while the natures are and remain distinct, the person is but one, and so continues forever. This is the great mystery of godliness and the great fact in human history. No wonder that it has always awakened the deepest attention, especially in the form of its occurrence. The contrast is inconceivably great. A child is born to obscure parents, and laid in a manger; yet that child is he to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.

The picture is a charming representation of the mother and child, around whom are gathered in adoration and surprise, the shepherds who were summoned by an angel to see this great sight. The appearance of the apartment, and the presence of the animals, suggest the affecting circumstances under which the infant Redeemer was first shown to men.



THE NATIVITY.

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

MATTHEW II., 1–12.

THE first visitors of the infant Jesus were the shepherds who watched their flocks near Bethlehem, but the next were persons of a very different social position. They were wise men from the East, Persian magi, men of high rank and influence, the depositaries of nearly all the knowledge and science of their time. They came from their distant home to the lowly cradle, and, bowing the knee to the babe, offered their choice gifts. Their coming was not a mere aimless marvel, but a type of the long procession of divers tribes and tongues which ever since has been continuously pressing to the Saviour's feet.

But how came they? What guided them in their long journey? A divine intimation adapted to their character and habits. Once, while they were scanning the nightly heavens, they detected a new orb, which attracted their attention as if it were significant of some new appearance on the earth. They connected this with the wide-spread tradition that one born in Judea should rule the world. And so they set forth to find him and do him homage. When they reached the Holy Land the stranger in the heavens reappeared, and guided them to the spot. The picture gives the stately procession moving slowly on, while before them gleams in the sky the luminous body which is their guide.

"The star was so beautiful, large and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy."

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

MATTHEW II., 13–15.

It was predicted of the Saviour that he should be despised and rejected of men.- The fulfillment of the prophecy began while he lay a babe in the cradle. The suspicious Herod, who then ruled the kingdom of Judea, was ready to take any step to remove a presumed competitor for his throne. But a divine interposition baffled his art and cruelty. Joseph, the just man, received from an angel of the Lord the direction, "Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt." The reasons why Egypt was chosen are obvious. It was a foreign country entirely beyond the reach of Herod, and yet it was not very far off, the nearest point being not more than sixty miles from Bethlehem. It was, moreover, extensively inhabited by Jews, through successive migrations from the time of the Babylonian exile. They became so numerous that in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus the Scriptures were translated into Greek, and a temple was built on Egyptian soil, which, for a time, rivaled the true sanctuary at Jerusalem. Here, therefore, Joseph would find himself among his countrymen, and enjoy as many privileges as it was possible for a Jew in exile to have.

The flight has been a favorite theme with artists for centuries, but the conception of the present picture is quite equal to the pathos and tender interest of the incident.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

MATTHEW II., 16–18.

HERE are what have been not improperly called the first martyrs for Jesus. When Herod found that the wise men mocked him he resorted to a cruel expedient to secure himself against any rival. He sent and destroyed all the male children in Bethlehem—not merely the babes, but as many as were not more than two years of age—probably, considering the size of the village, about eighteen or twenty in number. The deed seems so revolting that some have denied its possibility. But it is in full keeping with Herod's character. He was jealous, harsh, and blood-thirsty. He never spared age or sex on other occasions, and was so severe toward his own children that Augustus Cesar said it was better to be Herod's hog than his son. It is not at all strange, therefore, that he should order the death of a score of children in a country village. As to the little ones themselves, to them applies the old motto, *Near to the sword, near to God.* Augustine said, "Blessed infants! He who, at his birth, had angels to proclaim him, the heavens to testify, and the Magi to worship him, could surely have prevented them from dying had he not known that they died not in that death, but rather lived in higher bliss."

The scene is a painful one, but to those who can conquer this feeling, the groups and other details of the masterly picture will repay attentive study.

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

JESUS QUESTIONING THE DOCTORS.

LUKE II., 41–51.

THE incident here portrayed is remarkable as being the only one recorded of all that occurred between our Lord's infancy and his maturity. The rest of the interval is covered by the general statement that he was subject to his parents. The exception occurred in a peculiar way. Joseph and Mary had taken Jesus with them to the Passover at Jerusalem, when he was twelve years old. On their return they missed him from the company, and went back to the city, where, after long search, they found him occupied as the illustration represents, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."

Surely it was a strange spectacle: a mere lad surrounded by aged and learned men, yet speaking with such gravity and modesty as filled them with astonishment! In one of the many apartments of the temple, where the great teachers like Hillel and Shammai were accustomed to gather, behold an ingenuous stripling, who not simply listens, but puts inquiries of profound and far-reaching significance! The boy feels that he is in his Father's house and about his Father's business; and his divine mission makes itself conscious to his soul. In him the precocity was natural—an appropriate intimation of what was to come.

The picture is admirable in composition and expression. 'Tis a pity that the artist has put the central figure standing, when Luke says that he sat.

JESUS QUESTIONING THE DOCTORS.

JESUS HEALING THE SICK.

MATTHEW IV., 23.

The illustration is no mean rival to the celebrated work of Ary Schaeffer, entitled Christus Consolator. The pleasing theme is the gracious Son of Man "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." No case was presented to him which he was unable or unwilling to relieve. There is no danger that the most imaginative artist will transcend the reality in gathering around the healer representatives of all the varied ills to which humanity is heir. Here the Saviour lays his hand upon the head of an emaciated child borne in its mother's arms, while above another mother carries a lad whose vacant face indicates the lack of reason, and below a sick man lies stretched on the ground. At the foot of the picture a cripple presses forward to touch the hem of the Saviour's garment, on one side, and on the other some friend holds up the head of one from whom the breath seems on the point of departing.

These miracles of mercy carrying comfort and peace to so many hearts and households, are only type of that grace which heals the yet deeper maladies of the soul, and gives assurance of a higher world, where the inhabitant never says, "I am sick," and the days of mourning are forever ended.

JESUS HEALING THE SICK.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

MATTHEW V., 1, 2.

This discourse is well known as the longest recorded utterance of our Lord. This fact and the topics treated give to it a peculiar authority and importance. It is a popular and effective statement of the nature of the kingdom of heaven, which Jesus came to set up, and which he had said was just at hand; and its main purpose is to correct the errors which prevailed on that subject, and, in contrast, to set forth the truth. And so, without being a system of theology or an ethical code, it is a compendium of divine knowledge, which, in every age, has attracted the admiration of men. It begins with beatitudes upon the classes whom men are most apt to overlook, and it ends with a warning which none can afford to despise; and between these is a series of statements which have done more to elevate human thought and guide human action than all other teachings put together.

Tradition assigns as the place of its delivery a hill on the western shore of the lake of Galilee called "Kurun Hattin," from two horn-like heights which rise sixty feet above the plain between them, on which there are grassy slopes for the hearers to stand. Here the Great Teacher sat as represented in the plate, and uttered his wondrous discourse.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

JESUS BLESSING CHILDREN.

MARK X., 13–16.

THE whole Gospel scarcely records a more typical or characteristic feature of our Lord than the one described here. In heathenism children have no rights whatever. In classic times the power of the parent was absolute and irresponsible. It was lawful to expose one's offspring to abandonment and death, and philosophers deemed such a course even praiseworthy when the child was either deformed or weakly, and therefore gave little promise of being useful to the state.

Nothing even looking in such a direction can be found in the Mosaic economy. Human life was sedulously guarded, and an infant was not allowed to enter upon the second week of its existence without receiving the token of God's everlasting covenant. Yet when in our Lord's days infants were brought to him for his blessing, the disciples rebuked the parents. They thought that it was below the Master's dignity to deal with babes, and supposed that they were doing him honor in keeping away such youthful candidates for his blessing. But the record runs that he was "much displeased" at their officiousness. He had no sympathy with their cold, haughty, and unfeeling views. He recognized the worth of each infant in itself, as well as the instinctive yearnings of the parental heart.

Hence resulted the scene graphically depicted in the illustration. The little ones come to him from every quarter: some borne in arms, others on their own feet, while the disciples stand by, with grave and displeased looks, over against the eager and happy mothers who rejoice to receive for their children the benediction of the great prophet. How many aching hearts have been comforted by his cheering words, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." No doubt a very large proportion of the glorified inhabitants of heaven will be found to be of this class. The Saviour who blessed the little ones eighteen centuries ago is ready to do the like now, for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

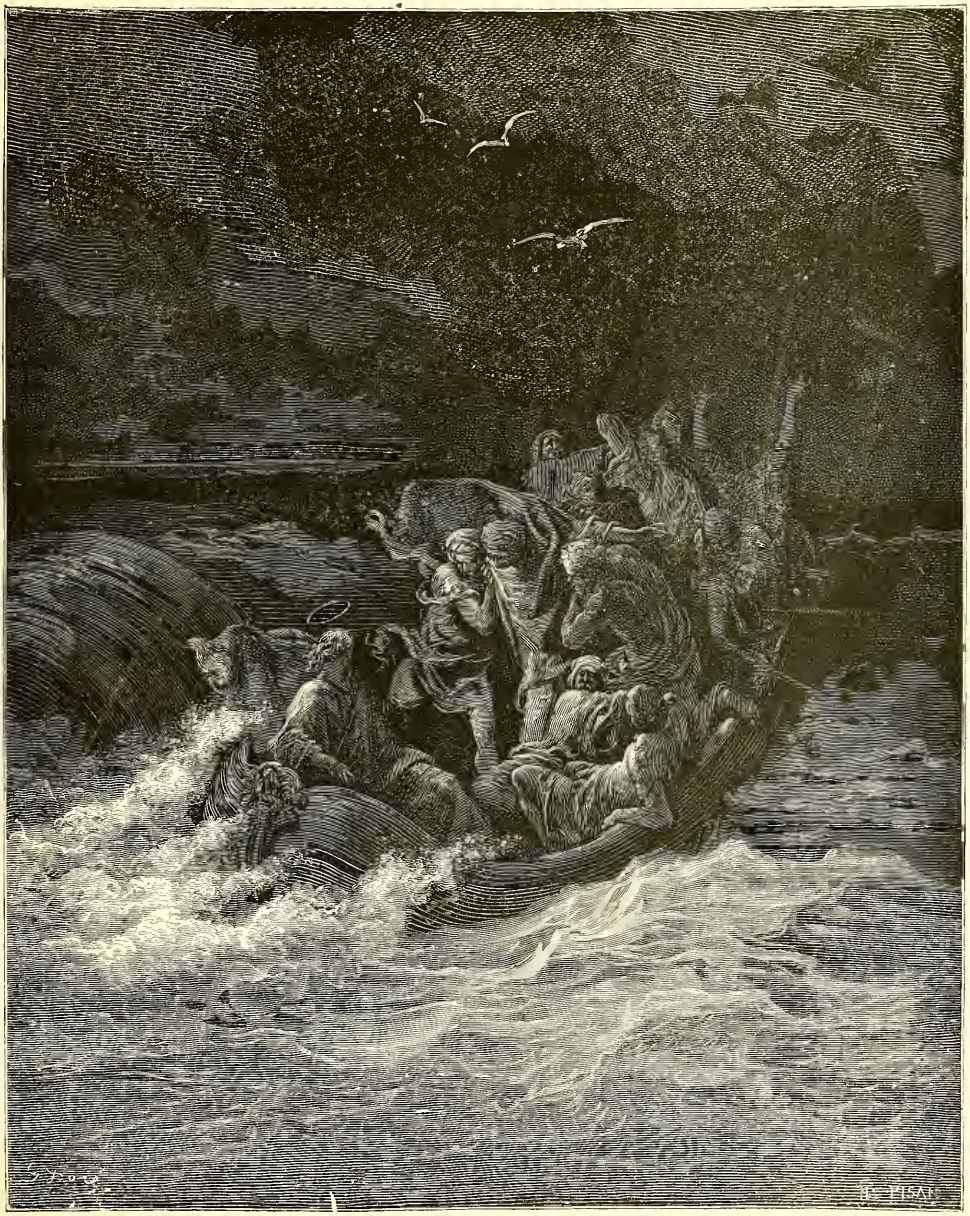
JESUS BLESSING CHILDREN.

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

MATTHEW VIII., 23–27.

The Lake of Galilee lies in its deep bed among the hills usually as smooth as a mirror, but there are times when sudden storms lash the waters into a furious tempest. On the eastern side there are ravines and gorges, down which the winds that sweep over the vast table-lands of the Hauran pour with incredible force, and the result is a most dangerous commotion of the waves. On one occasion, during such a storm, our Lord was crossing the sea. At first the water was calm and our Lord slept nor did even the tumult of the wind and rain, when the storm arose, awake him. But the disciples were alarmed, as indeed they had reason to be, if left to themselves. When wave after wave broke over the deck and it seemed as if they must soon go down, they came and aroused him with the words, "Lord save us; we perish." He rebuked them for their unbelieving fears; how could the ship go to wreck that carried Jesus? Then he turned and rebuked the wind as it it had been a living power, and bade the angry sea be still. Both obeyed him at once. Not only did the wind cease to blow, but its effects also. The calm was great and immediate.

The illustration vividly portrays the striking scene: the dark night, the dashing waves, the rocking vessel, the astonished faces of the disciples, and the calm unmoved figure of Him who holds winds and waves in the hollow of His hand.



CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

THE DUMB MAN POSSESSED

MATTHEW IX., 32.

It was written of old (Isaiah xxxv., 6), in reference to the times of the Messiah, that then the tongue of the dumb should sing. A fulfillment of this prediction is the subject of the illustration here. But the poor unfortunate was not a mute by birth or by disease, but by the possession of an evil spirit, and therefore the more hopeless. But the Being to whom his friends brought the demoniac was one who had the same power over the world of spirits which he exerted upon the various forms of disease. Nothing was too hard for him. With a word he cast out the evil spirit, and then the dumb spake.

The artist has chosen to put the occurrence at a place where a castellated hill, with two or three slender palms, is relieved against a clear sky, and the calm beauty of nature stands over against the misery of a human soul subdued by a foul fiend from the pit. The figures represent the imploring earnestness of the mute, and the inquiring gaze of the spectators, before the miracle is accomplished which made "the multitudes marvel and glorify God who had given such power unto men."

THE DUMB MAN POSSESSED.

CHRIST IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

MATTHEW XIII., 54.

THE scene is the place of assembly in Christ's own city, Capernaum. Such meetings date from the time of the Captivity. Their main purpose was for the public reading of the law, with which, of course, prayers were joined, and usually an opportunity for exhortation was offered to whoever would avail himself of it. In the time of our Lord there were synagogues all over the land. Jesus appears always to have joined in this worship, sometimes in silence, at others speaking the word. On the occasion referred to here he "taught," or rather was teaching, implying a continuous habit. His teaching produced a deep impression. It was so pure, so fresh, so genial, so original, that men were astonished, and asked, Whence hath this man this wisdom? It seemed to them something supernatural, yet they did not receive its author. They refused to believe in him. They knew his father and his mother, and his brothers and his sisters, and were unwilling to admit that a prophet could issue from such lowly surroundings. So they could see and hear him speaking as shown in the picture, as never man spake, and yet be unwilling to heed. Hence his solemn declaration that it should be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for Capernaum. (Matt. xi., 24.)

CHRIST IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

THE DISCIPLES PLUCKING CORN ON THE SABBATH.

MARK II., 23-28.

THE scene gives a vivid illustration of the cold, rigid, narrow, superstitious formalism which governed our Lord's countrymen. They observed the Master, with his disciples, walking through the grain fields on the Sabbath day, and the latter plucking some of the ripe grain. Immediately they brought a charge of transgression, not because they took what did not belong to them, but because they violated holy time. The law forbade plowing and grinding on the Sabbath, and when the disciples rubbed the ears of grain together they did a species of grinding, and so came under the prohibition! Nor was this a solitary or extreme specimen of their puerile extravagance. On the contrary, there were scores and scores of just such pedantic and childish regulations. It is no wonder, therefore, that our Lord's principal statements concerning the Sabbath were directed against their superstitious follies, showing that works of necessity and mercy on the holy day were always authorized by the Old Testament itself, as well as by reason and the nature of things. "For the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The Sabbath is a means, and when a means defeats its own avowed end of course it ceases to have validity, and not only may, but must, be disregarded.

THE DISCIPLES PLUCKING CORN ON THE SABBATH.

JESUS WALKING ON THE WATER.

MARK VI., 47–52.

JESUS had sent the disciples across the lake, while he dismissed the crowds who had been fed by miracle. So that when even was come they were on the sea, while he was alone on the land. As they rowed, however, a sudden squall struck down on the lake from the hills around, and caught their vessel. It was the last watch of the night, between three and six o'clock in the morning, and the weary boatmen had been toiling at their oars since the night before, but though the whole distance to be rowed was only six miles, they had made but two-thirds of the way. Jesus was not with them to still the wind, and their own strength and skill had availed little. But suddenly close to the boat they saw, through the gleam of the water and the broken light of the stars, a human form on the sea. At once there was an outcry, for they were affrighted, for they supposed that it was a spirit. This was not because they were unlettered or superstitious. The most courageous man will tremble at the sight of what he supposes to be a being from the other world. There is something in men which makes them shrink from close contact with the world of spirits. But the disciples' terror was only for the moment. Presently they heard above the noise of winds and waves the words of a well-known voice: "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid." It is apparently this juncture in the narrative which the artist has taken for his sketch, which well suggests the cheering Saviour, the raging sea, and the storm-tossed boat.

"Jesu, Deliverer!
Come thou to me!
Soothe thou my voyaging
Over life's sea!
Thou, when the storm of death
Roars sweeping by,
Whisper, O Truth of Truth!
'Peace! It is I!'"

JESUS WALKING ON THE WATER.

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

MARK XI., 1–10.

THIS picture represents an unexampled scene in our Lord's life. On all previous occasions he had entered Jerusalem on foot and in the most unpretending manner. Here, however, he comes in royal state, preceded and followed by crowds who rend the air with exulting shouts. Nor is this accidental. While yet at a distance from the holy city, as he was approaching from Bethany, he sent for a she-ass with her foal, belonging, no doubt, to one of his disciples, and, when the commission was obeyed, he mounted the animal and set forth around the southern slope of Olivet, some of his disciples spreading their garments in the way, others cutting down branches of the trees and strewing them before him. The design was thus once publicly to proclaim himself the Messiah, to enter the holy city, in accordance with ancient prophecy (Zech. ix. 9), as a king; not indeed politically, or in rivalry with the existing government, but as a Prince of Peace, without arms, or trophies, or trains of captives. Men should see him openly assuming the appearance and claims of the Christ of God, so that misconception would be no longer possible. He therefore made no attempt to check the popular feeling in his favor, but accepted freely the loud and frequent hosannahs.

The artist has evidently caught the spirit of the scene, and the varied postures and gestures of the attendant crowd well convey the enthusiasm of the occasion.

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

JESUS AND THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

MARK XII., 13–17.

HERE is the result of an artful attempt to embroil the Master with the civil authorities. The Jews were the unwilling subjects of the Roman power. So our Lord's enemies sent certain persons to him to ask, as sincere and anxious inquirers, whether it were lawful to give the tribute money exacted by Cæsar, or not. If he answered that it was lawful, he would offend the ultra-national party among the people, and appear to side with their oppressors. If, on the other hand, he said it was wrong, he would draw down upon him the wrath of the Roman rulers. Danger lay on either hand, and extrication seemed impossible.

Yet the plot utterly miscarried. Our Lord perceived the hypocrisy and malice which prompted the question, and answered accordingly. He directed a coin to be brought, and then asked them whose image and superscription it bore. The answer was, of course, "Cæsar's;" whereupon he said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." To this no reply was possible. The engraving displays the fine contrast between the serene countenance of Jesus and the sinister looks of the hypocritical tempters whom he thus foiled to their exceeding astonishment.

JESUS AND THE TRIBUTE MONEY

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

MARK XII, 41-44.

In one of the fore-courts of the temple was "the treasury," where were received the offerings of the people for the support of public worship. There were numerous chests with trumpet-shaped openings, into which the money was dropped. On one occasion our Lord sat opposite the place, and observed the constant stream of persons of all classes casting in their gifts. Many of these who were rich cast in gold and silver, but one poor widow came and bestowed only "two mites, which make a farthing," the whole gift being so small that Western nations have no coin minute enough to express it. In the illustration her timid, shrinking form stands in strong contrast with the complacent Jew who is ostentatiously opening his purse. And our Lord in the rear is uttering the words which have made the widow's gift known and remembered wherever the Gospel has been preached. "Verily I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." The grounds of the divine commendation are distinctly specified—she gave all. She might have given one of the two mites, but she gave both—doubtless the entire amount of her daily income. A person so poor as the widow would necessarily live from hand to mouth, and possess no capital except what she received from one source or another day after day.

Her piety and liberality are shown in the fact that she gave to the temple treasury what cost her so much. Imperfect men managed the funds, and often they were ill applied; but they were for the glory of God, and she proposed to do what she could. Small as the gift was it was a great sacrifice to her, and required very considerable self-denial, and hence our Lord's praise. People often talk of giving their mites when they do not even approach the widow's generosity, for they give of their abundance and afterward have enough to spare; but she gave of her want and had nothing left. The next meal's victuals was to be earned.

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

RAISING OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

LUKE VIII., 41–56.

On his first and only visit to Gadara, east of the Sea of Galilee, our Lord was entreated by the people to withdraw, which he did; but no sooner had he returned to his own city than he found the crowd eagerly waiting to receive him, and among them one anxious and heart-stricken man, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter lay dying, and who besought our Saviour with all the passion of a father's love, to save his child. But the crowd hung round the Master, and the case of the suffering woman who, unwilling to face him, yet stooped and touched in faith the hem of his garment, and so was healed, retarded his movements; so that ere he had reached the house news came that the young girl had breathed her last and all was over. The father, therefore, was bidden not to trouble the Master farther; but Jesus said to him, Be not afraid, only believe.

The crowd of relatives and friends that always throng to a chamber of death in the East, had already begun their pitiful cries and lamentations, but the noise and confusion was not in keeping with our Lord's purpose. So he dismissed them all, and taking only Peter, James and John, with the father and the mother of the girl, entered the room where the body lay, and wrought with a word the wondrous restoration. The illustration represents him laying his hand upon the maiden's brow, but the Gospel says that he took her by the hand and said, "Maid, arise." His voice recalled the departed spirit, and the anguished mother whose form is seen bowed in speechless agony over the couch received her daughter alive and in full health.

RAISING OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

LUKE X., 29–37.

THE road from Jerusalem to Jericho leads through a wild and desolate ravine, which in our Lord's time was notorious for being infested with robbers, as it is even to-day a dangerous road for people to travel alone. It is here that the Saviour laid the scene of one of the most touching of his parables. A self-righteous lawyer had asked, Who is my neighbor? apparently supposing that the answer would be in accordance with the narrow prejudices of the Jewish nation at that time. So far from that, the Master tells a story of a Jew who, traveling on the lonely road to Jericho, was robbed and beaten, and left half dead. Presently there came along a priest, and after him a Levite, who saw the wounded man, but gave him no relief. Both were men who, from their office, ought to have been ready to help a case of distress, but they were too selfish or too unfeeling to turn out of the way. Then came another, a Samaritan, belonging to a race which "had no dealings" (John iv. 9) with the Jews. He might have excused himself by saying that this was Jewish territory, and that a case of distress like this should be cared for by the countrymen of the sufferer. But he did nothing of the sort. He saw a man stripped of his raiment and half dead. He asked no questions, but at once went to his aid. He acted as well as felt. He spared no pains or expense in befriending the helpless man. Stranger as he was, he went to him, bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, took care of him, and on departing the next day, gave the host money with the charge, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.

The illustration exhibits the generous Samaritan guiding the horse and keeping poised in the saddle the poor sufferer.

No finer expression is to be found in any literature of the nature of genuine charity. It is not to be restricted to any one race or class, but is to be world-wide in its sweep. The only question to be asked is, Is there real distress, real need? If so, every man is bound to render aid according to his means. All men admire the good Samaritan, but all do not remember what the Saviour said at the close of the parable, Go thou and do likewise. It may entail self-sacrifice, in money and time and trouble, and there may be little or no return in gratitude from those who are aided, but the duty remains the same. If it were universally or even generally performed, this world would be much happier than it is.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

ARRIVAL OF THE SAMARITAN AT THE INN.

THE parable is so moving and instructive that two illustrations of its incidents are given. Three hours from Jerusalem there still stands a khan by the roadside, where travelers stop for rest and refreshment. It was doubtless to a building of the same kind, if not on the same spot, that the Samaritan conveyed the man whom he was helping. The artist represents him carefully lifting the victim of the robbers off his beast, while the host with outspread arms waits to receive him, and a female figure looks on from the balustrade above. The incident is worthy of illustration as bringing vividly before the mind the thoroughness of the Samaritan's kindness. He meets all the wants of the case, and does not leave the sufferer until every needful provision has been made for him.

He beheld the poor man's need,
Bound his wounds, and with all speed
Set him on his own good steed,
And brought him to the inn.

When our Judge shall reappear,
Thinkest thou this man will hear
"Wherefore didst thou interfere
With what concerned not thee?"

No! the words of Christ will run,
"Whatsoever thou hast done
To this poor and suffering one,
That hast thou done to me!

ARRIVAL OF THE SAMARITAN AT THE INN.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

LUKE XV., 11–32.

THE picture gives the closing scene of what has been called the pearl of the parables, one containing the very heart of the Gospel and stating it in a narrative, which for simplicity, vividness, grace and pathos is wholly unequaled in the Scripture or out of it. A wayward son wanders off from his father's house and squanders his means in riotous living. At last he comes to utter want, and sinks so low as to become what was of all things most offensive to a Jew, a swineherd. Yet even in this painful situation he was at a loss for food, and was glad to get "the husks," or rather pods of the carob tree, which are usually fed to swine, and sometimes are eaten by the very poor. While thus distressed "he came to himself," and recalled the abundance that prevailed in the happy home he had left. Forthwith he resolved to return with confession of his shame and unworthiness, and ask even to be made a hired servant where he once had been a son. He set out, but was not allowed to fulfill his purpose. While he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and without waiting ran at once to receive the returning prodigal, and lavish upon him every token of his compassionate love, without a word of reproof for the past or even admonition for the present.

It is this meeting which stands before us in the illustration. The poor outcast, kneeling with bowed head, the father clasping him to his heart with a face upturned in thanksgiving to heaven, the servants hurrying from all directions to the place, and the dogs barking their welcome.

The parable is so plain that its meaning cannot be mistaken. The sinner, a voluntary exile from his father's house, his sin leading to want and suffering, at last delusions swept away, the sense of guilt and unworthiness aroused, the humble confession, and the returning steps homeward; then the exceeding grace of God anticipating the uttered petition, more ready to give than we are to ask, ready to bestow a full and immediate forgiveness and to reinstate the penitent in the position he had so recklessly abandoned. How many distressed souls in every age have been comforted by this affecting exhibition of Divine compassion!

THE PRODIGAL SON.

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN.

LUKE XVI.

THE leading features of this parable are familiar to every reader of Scripture. Dives was dressed in costly robes and lived in splendid luxury. When he died he was honored with a stately funeral, but beyond the grave he "lifted up his eyes being in torments." On the other hand there lay at his gates a beggar full of sores which the dogs licked, and so abject that he longed to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. He, too, died, and, as it would seem, had only a poor and hasty interment; but his soul was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, that is, a place of rest, safety, and bliss.

The whole range of fiction hardly presents a contrast so complete and striking in every particular. The illustration exhibits the first stage, that which took place on earth. The scene is portrayed with great liveliness and fidelity, except in one point where there is an addition that is not warranted by the evangelists, and mars the teaching of the parable. One servant is represented as warning off the beggar, and another as ready to enforce the warning with a scourge. Not a hint of this kind is given in the narrative. It does not appear that the rich man was cruel or harsh, much less that he was an habitual violator of any of the ten commandments. All that we are told is that he simply lived to himself. He knew that there were better uses to be made of money than simply to consume it in sensual pleasures. He had within sight a fellow being in a wretched condition whose wants he could easily relieve. But he took no steps in this direction and had no concern whether Lazarus lived or died. It was his selfish unconcern for others of the same flesh and blood that ruined him. It was not what he did, but what he failed to do that drew down heaven's displeasure.

The Scripture nowhere condemns the rich as sinners or praises the poor as saints. Everything depends upon the way in which men conduct themselves in their varying circumstances.

LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

LUKE XVIII, 9–14.

The great trouble with the people of our Lord's day was not the quantity of their religion, but its quality. They were very religious, that is, the body of the people as represented by the Pharisees. They were punctilious in devout observances, and laborious in many directions; but all was cold, dry and formal, a body without a soul. Men were puffed up with a sense of their own excellence, and looked with contempt upon others. To meet this case, the Saviour uttered the parable which is finely expressed in the illustration before us.

Two men went up to the temple to pray. One, the Pharisee, thanked God that he was not as other men, and recited the number of his fasts and the extent of his tithes. His prayer was simply a recital of his own merits. It contained no confession and no petition, no acknowledgment of sin and no supplication for pardon. And the proud profession of excellence was accompanied with an uncharitable reflection upon a brother sinner—"or even as this publican." And so he stands in the plate, a picture of self-satisfaction and pride. And yet he was in a most dangerous condition. No man is in such a hopeless state as he who is not sensible of his sins. His case is the case of a sick man who has no more pain because mortification has set in.

The publican pursued a course exactly opposite. He stood afar off as if unworthy to draw near. He smote upon his heart in token of contrition. He offered a most becoming prayer. It was a real prayer, asking for a great spiritual blessing. It was a personal prayer. Unlike the Pharisee he had nothing to say about other people, but expressed his own pressing wants. It was an humble prayer, "Be merciful to me a sinner," or rather, according to the original, "to me the sinner." He felt that he was a great sinner, with no excuse to make, no pleas to offer. And so he asks for mercy, *i. e.*, the bestowment of that to which in himself he has no claim. And the word he uses is one that implies a reference to propitiation as the ground of confidence.

The result was in accordance with the character of the prayers. The Pharisee took nothing by his act of worship. The publican, on the contrary, went home justified. And so it ever is. He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Humility is among the first and foremost graces of the Christian character.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

JOHN IV., 1–30.

AMONG the few ancient sites in Palestine which are certainly determined is the well of Sychar, known from extreme antiquity as "Jacob's Well." Although neglected, and sometimes filled up by the ignorant Mohammedans around, it is still to be visited and its water tasted. Here our Saviour, on his way to Galilee, one day at noon rested, while his disciples went to the neighboring city to buy bread. As he sat upon the well-curb there came a woman to draw water, as is the custom for women in that country to this day. To her great surprise our Lord entered into conversation with her, asking her to give him to drink, and then offering to give her the living water that springeth up unto everlasting life. Afterward he shewed that he knew her previous history as living with one who was not her husband, and proclaimed himself to her as the Messiah who was to come. The woman was so impressed that she left her water-pot and went to the city, to tell what she had heard. When the disciples returned they were astonished to find him conversing with a woman, and that woman a Samaritan. They failed to see the tender grace of their Lord, who gave up his own rest for the sake of teaching the daughter of an alien race, and who revealed his mission even to a woman that was a sinner.

The illustration presents the scene with grace and power. The well is given, not as it now is, but as it doubtless was in the days of our Lord's flesh. The touching story is still full of suggestiveness.

"Sweet was the hour, O Lord, to thee
At Sychar's lonely well,
When a poor outcast heard thee there
Thy great salvation tell.

"And, Lord, to us, as vile as she,
Thy gracious lips have told
That mystery of love, revealed
At Jacob's well of old."

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

JESUS AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

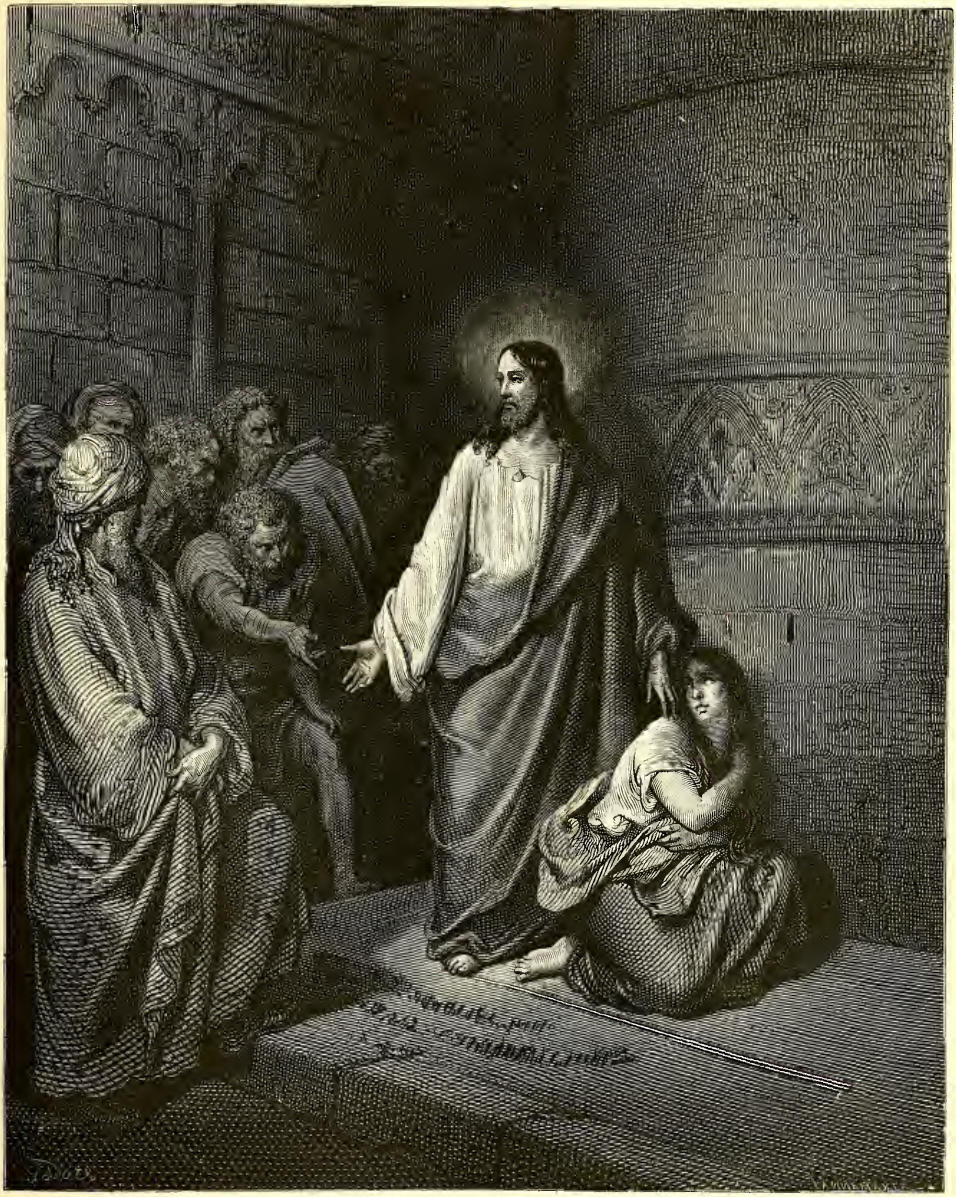
JOHN VIII., 3–11.

The genuineness of this passage in John's Gospel has long been questioned. It is conceded by most critical scholars that it was not a part of the original writing, but is a genuine apostolical tradition, which in some way became incorporated with the text. In itself it is certainly a most appropriate and significant record, so much like our Saviour's method that it could hardly have been invented.

Men brought to him a fallen woman whose sin was manifest and undeniable, and asked him what was to be done with her, saying that the law commanded that such should be stoned. Our Lord stooped down, and with his fingers wrote upon the ground as though he heard them not—thus expressing, in the gentlest way, that it was not his duty to interfere with the administration of justice. But, determined to entrap him, they continued their questions, whereupon he arose and administered a pungent rebuke, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." He did not justify the woman or palliate her sins, but reminded her accusers that they as witnesses were, by the law, to be the executioners. Could they be so? Did they themselves have clear consciences as to the Seventh Commandment? And then he resumed his writing upon the ground. But they being convicted by their own conscience, went out, one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last.

The illustration tells the story. The crouching penitent, imploring yet shrinking, the scowling Pharisees, and the dignified Saviour with the marks on the ground where he wrote.

The incident illustrates the superhuman wisdom and grace of our Lord. His foes come, remembering how he had eaten with publicans and sinners, and allowed a penitent harlot to wash his feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair, and they bring this case hoping to induce him to say something that would either contradict the law of Moses or his own words. Yet, so far from putting him to shame they were put to shame themselves. And as for the poor woman, the Lord dismisses her in the most becoming way. "Neither do I condemn thee." It is not my province to act the civil judge or to pronounce any sentence. But lest she might think that her offense was light or trivial, he adds the words, "Go and sin no more."



JESUS AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

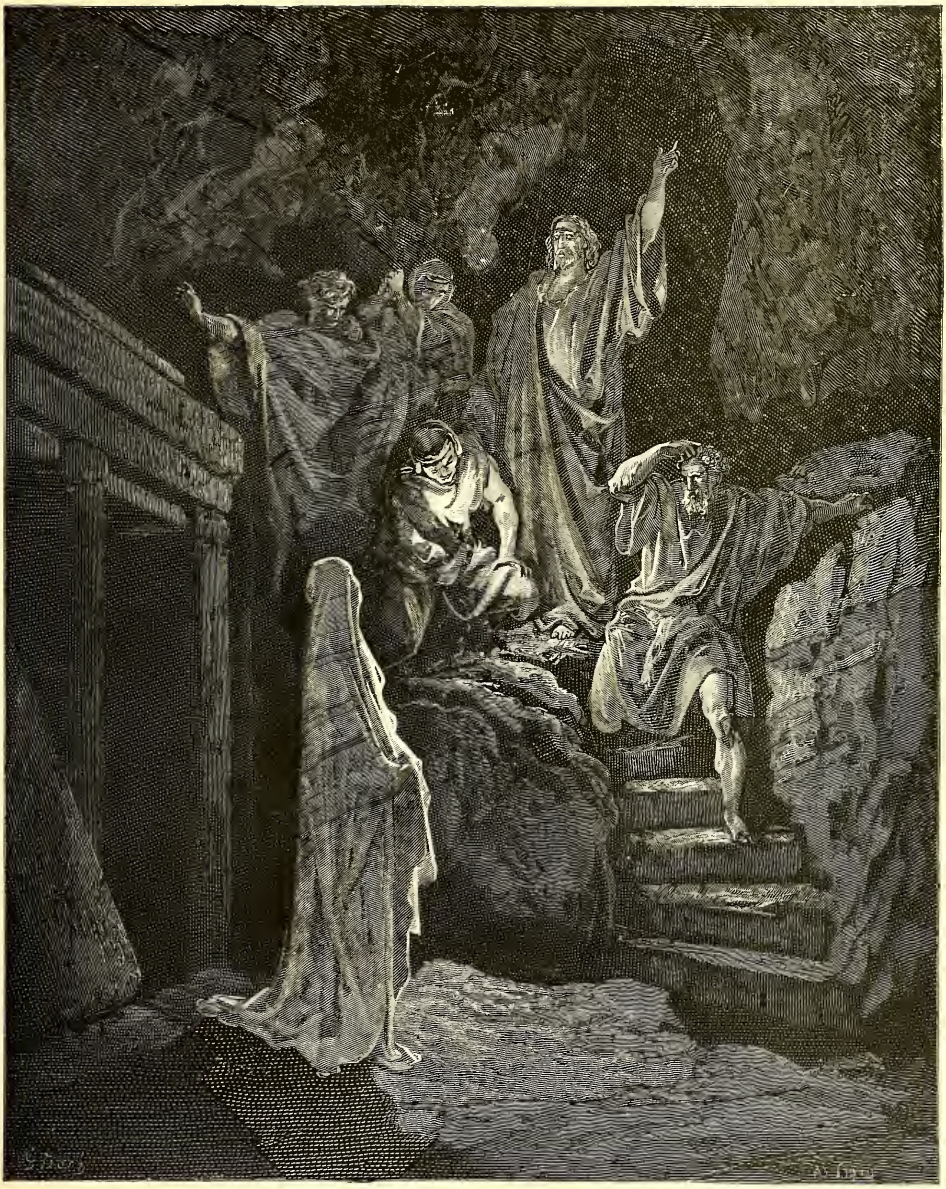
THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS.

JOHN XI.

THE picture is quite true to archæology in representing the grave as a *loculus* or recess cut in the side of a natural cave and closed by a huge stone fitted into a groove. Here the slab is seen thrust aside, and the sheeted dead walking forth to the surprise of the beholders.

The event itself is the third of the kind. Before, our Lord had raised up the daughter of Jairus soon after her death, and had resuscitated the only son of his mother when at Nain, the funeral procession was on the way to the cemetery. But here the case was that of one who had lain for days in the tomb. The whole narrative is extremely touching. Jesus is away in Perea when he hears of the sickness of Lazarus, but he does not stir; afterwards when death has ensued he goes to the bereaved family. He meets Martha, and after receiving her implied reproach, utters the sublime and comforting words, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Then he meets the other sister, and groaning in spirit at her deep sorrow, mingles his tears with hers, and the Jews say, "Behold, how he loved him." Coming to the tomb he orders the stone to be rolled away. Even yet Martha could not believe in the great blessing she was to receive, and remonstrated. But the answer came, "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" Then after a thanksgiving to his Father, the Lord uttered the words which reached the ears of the dead, "Lazarus, come forth," and the miracle was accomplished.

But what was life to Lazarus was death to his benefactor. The parties were so well known, the family was of so much social importance, the witnesses were so many and various, and the miracle itself was so astounding, that from that moment the enemies of our Lord came to the deliberate and express determination that he must die. The only question was as to the time and the opportunity, not at all as to the fact. For in no other way, as they supposed, could they save themselves and maintain the existing posture of affairs in church and state.



THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS.

MARY MAGDALENE.

MARK XVI, 9.

THE illustration presents the form of a broken-hearted penitent, bowing before a skull amid surroundings of a somber and awful character. It is therefore a just delineation of a fallen woman who, in deep abasement, bewails her sin. But it is in no sense or degree a picture of Mary of Magdala. The prevalent notion that she was "a sinner" is an ecclesiastical tradition which has not an atom of support in the Scripture narrative. It is true that Mary was 'possessed of seven devils," who were cast out by our Lord. But demoniacal possession is not an impeachment of moral character. Nor is there anything recorded of Mary which countenances such a suspicion. She was a woman of position and means, and the head of the band of Galilean women who accompanied our Lord on his later journeys and ministered to his wants. One of these women was the wife of an important officer in the household of Herod Antipas. Surely such persons would not have chosen as their leader one whose reputation had previously been tainted.

Mary's gratitude for her deliverance from demoniacal possession led her to attach herself to the service of the Master with singular affection. She was last at the cross and first at the sepulcher. And at the early dawn of the first day of the week she went with her companions with spices to embalm that sacred person which she had seen so cruelly treated. Even the death of Jesus did not impair her devoted attachment. And as a fitting record for her extraordinary love, to her was granted the first sight of the risen Saviour.

It is a pity that the memory of such an eminent disciple should be tarnished for so many ages by being associated with houses of refuge for the fallen of her sex—as if she had ever been of the number.

MARY MAGDALENE.

THE LAST SUPPER.

MATTHEW XXVI, 26–29.

This theme has often been treated by artists, and the famous fresco of Leonardo at Milan is familiar by copies at least to all. Yet is the work of Doré quite worthy of him and of the occasion. The Master's countenance, the youthful John on his right, and the blended eagerness and apprehension of the rest of the group, well befit the institution of that tender and solemn sacrament which is to perpetuate the memory of his sacrificial death till time shall be no more.

It is a characteristic manifestation of the Saviour's love that "the night in which he was betrayed," and only a few hours before his passion, he occupied himself with what would be for the comfort of his people in instituting this blessed rite. The broken bread was to remind them of the body given to death on the cross, and the poured out wine, of the blood shed for the remission of sins. Both elements together were a memorial of the one great sacrifice by which guilt is expiated and pardon secured. And hence in all ages believers have delighted to obey the dying command. Each has been ready to say

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice,
I must remember thee.

THE LAST SUPPER.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

LUKE XXII.

On the western slope of the Mount of Olives there is still shown an inclosure having some very venerable olive trees, which is called the Garden of Gethsemane. It may or may not be the exact spot, but somewhere in this vicinity was the place consecrated by the passion of our Lord.

Here he bore the chastisement of our peace. Here he endured the travail of soul required for a world's ransom. On him there rested at that hour a load of grief compared with which the aggregated sorrows of the human family, before and since, are nothing. "Yes, if we could collect the tears of widowed wives, and childless mothers, and forsaken orphans, the cries of every battle-field, the groans of every hospital, the shrieks of every torture-room, the unheard sobs which have been stifled in the prison-house, and all those deeper agonies which never find expression—they would be as nothing to the single pang which wrung his heart upon that awful night."

The picture has given some of the lines of sinless sorrow which marred the Redeemer's face, but art has no line long enough to sound that deep, deep sea to the bottom. The agony was so great that it forced the sweat like drops of blood out of every pore, and there was needed a white-winged angel from heaven to impart strength to his tottering bodily frame.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

PRAYER OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES.

MATTHEW XXVI., 36–45.

When Jesus came to Gethsemane, he bade his disciples wait while he, taking Peter, James, and John, went forward to pray. The four pass in among the olive trees till their forms are lost from sight. Then three of them recline on the ground, while the Master presses on into a deeper shade and a remoter solitude, and there, not as the picture presents him, upright, but prone on the ground, he prays that if it were possible the cup might pass from him.

The prayer is remarkable for its combination of earnestness and submission. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." His human nature shrinks from the unutterable agony and cries out for relief; yet still, overborne as he is by the crushing load, he submits to his Father's will. Thrice the prayer is repeated, and thrice the qualifying clause. Meanwhile the three chosen companions are sleeping. He rouses them once and again, but still they sleep, sleep at that dread moment when the captain of their salvation is made perfect through suffering.

PRAYER OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF OLIVES.

THE BETRAYAL.

LUKE XXII.

It was while our Lord was remonstrating with the disciples for their sloth that the glare of torches was seen through the olive trees and the noise of the approaching soldiers heard. Presently the whole band appeared, and Judas gave the appointed signal to the rest by going up to the Master with the hypocritical salutation, "Hail, Rabbi," and kissing him tenderly.* So was accomplished the most enormous wickedness the earth has seen.

The enemies of our Lord were fully determined upon his death, but were at a loss how to accomplish it, since he had numerous friends and they were afraid of making an uproar among the people if they arrested him in open day. But they were relieved from their embarrassment in a most unexpected way. One of his own disciples offered to betray him. They eagerly accepted the offer, and paid him for his crime the despicable sum of thirty pieces of silver—the price of a slave. The wretched man fulfilled his bargain, as shown in the illustration. The only reproof he received from the Being whom he so cruelly injured was, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" The serene sorrow and dignified calm of the Saviour contrast finely with the eager and excited look of his betrayer.

The plain statements of Scripture forbid the belief that Judas was actuated by any other motive than avarice. But he seems to have supposed that our Lord would in some way extricate himself from the hand of his foes. When he saw that this was not done, but that trial and condemnation were to be followed by crucifixion, remorse seized upon his soul, and he hurried away to the temple to cast down his ill-gotten silver and proclaim the innocence of the man he had betrayed. This did not alter the result, but it added his testimony to that of all others who knew our Lord, to the fact that he was without sin.

* This is the full meaning of the word used in Mark xiv., 45.

THE BETRAYAL.

CHRIST FAINTING UNDER THE CROSS.

MARK XV., 21.

One of the aggravations of crucifixion was that the victim was compelled to carry the instrument of his torture to the place of execution. Our Lord was not spared this added humiliation. Faint with vigils of the preceding night, with the rudeness and insults of the crowd and the terrible scourging, he sank under the weight of his burden. The guard grew impatient, and seizing a foreign-born Jew, just coming in from the country, compelled him to share the load.

The finely-drawn illustration reproduces with great force the fallen form of the Master and the sturdy limbs of his involuntary companion.

CHRIST FAINTING UNDER THE CROSS.

THE FLAGELLATION.

MARK XV., 15.

THIS painful picture represents a scene from which one would fain hide his eyes. The sacred person of the Redeemer was subjected to the brutal scourging of Roman lictors—a punishment which usually preceded crucifixion. The artist has well represented the meek endurance of the thorn-crowned sufferer. He felt every stroke, but he murmured not, threatened not.

This infliction was but one item in a series. Yet it has peculiar interest to believers, in view of its relation to ancient prophecy. In the remarkable prediction of the suffering Messiah, in Isaiah (liii.), it is said of him, "and with his stripes we are healed"—words which long afterwards were quoted by the Apostle Peter (I. ii., 24), in setting forth the nature and cause of our Lord's sufferings. The heavy rods swung in the air, and coming down with tremendous force upon the Redeemer were to him torture and dishonor, but to his people just the reverse—the chastisement which procures their peace, the expiation that heals and saves their souls.

What thou, my Lord, hast suffered
  Was all for sinners' gain:
Mine, mine, was the transgression,
  But thine the deadly pain.
Lo! here I fall, my Saviour:
  'Tis I deserve thy place:
Look on me with thy favor,
  Vouchsafe to me thy grace.

THE FLAGELLATION.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

MATTHEW XXVII., 45-49.

DEATH by the cross was the most dreaded and shameful punishment of antiquity, one the very name of which, Cicero said, should never come near the thoughts, the eyes, or ears, of a Roman citizen, far less his person. It was wholly unknown to the Jews; a cruelty inflicted by heathenism, which had no compassion or reverence for man as man, upon the worst of criminals. Yet this was the death by which the Saviour of men was doomed to die. He hung in the midst between two highway robbers, as if the worst of the three.

Although men were so indifferent to the scene, Nature was not. The earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the sun was hid. It is this latter token of sympathy which furnished the motive of the picture. Darkness overhangs the place, but a single sheet of lightning illumines the figure of our Lord. Amid the gloom are seen the mounted soldiers overseeing the tragedy, while by the side of one of the rent rocks stand the veiled figures of the holy women who were determined, even if all else forsook him and fled, to stand by him to the last and to show their undiminished affection. "Love is strong as death."

THE CRUCIFIXION.

CLOSE OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

MATTHEW XXVII., 50-53.

HERE the artist represents the effect of one of the miraculous features of this extraordinary scene—the tremendous earthquake which rent the rocks and shook the whole mount. The Roman guard, veterans of many a well-fought field, flee in dismay. They are strong enough to cope with mortal men, but powerless before a convulsion of nature. The whole array, not merely the mounted men in the foreground, but the troops in the rear, are in motion as if seeking a place of security. In serene contrast with them are the female forms seen clustering around the foot of the cross. They neither fainted nor went into hysterics, but calm and self-controlled maintained their loving watch unto the end. Not even the trembling earth nor the cleaving rocks could shake their constancy, any more than could the crowd of taunting Jews and rough Roman soldiers. The fortitude of woman, when resting upon faith and love, is quite unconquerable.

"Not she with trait'rous kiss her Saviour stung,
Not she denied him with unholy tongue;
She, while apostles shrank, could danger brave,
Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave.

CLOSE OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

JOHN XIX., 38–42.

ACCORDING to prophecy, our Lord was not only to die, but to give full assurance of the fact by being buried. As he himself said (Matt. xii., 40), "the Son of man should be three days and three nights [*i. e.*, according to the Hebrew use of terms, one day and two nights or parts of three days] in the heart of the earth." A rich disciple, named Joseph of Arimathea, had influence enough with Pilate to obtain the body of Jesus, which otherwise would have been treated with ignominy. With him was joined Nicodemus, the same who had once come to Jesus by night, and who now showed more reverence and honor to our Lord when dead than he had ever done when alive. Near Calvary was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulcher wherein was never man yet laid. This was the property of Joseph, who had hewn it out in the rock. In this Jesus was laid by his two friends. While our Lord lived he had no house of his own, and when he died he was buried in another man's tomb.

The plate shows the little procession, the two men reverently and tenderly carrying the sacred body, and the devout women accompanying.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

THE ANGEL AT THE SEPULCHER.

MATTHEW XXVIII., 1–7.

THE record of our Lord's funeral ends with the statement that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting over against the sepulcher. The record of his resurrection begins with the visit of the same persons to the place of burial.

They came to anoint his body, and at first were perplexed to know how they could get the stone rolled away that secured the tomb. But they were speedily relieved from their embarrassment. There had been an earthquake caused by the descent of an angel of the Lord, who, coming down from the abodes of glory, rolled away the stone from the door and sat upon it. He, of course, as an object of sight had a human form, but that form was brilliant beyond conception. A supernatural brightness shone out in his person and his raiment. The dazzling purity of a heavenly state took on an outward manifestation to mortal eyes.

The effect of this sight upon the guards was overpowering. They "shook and became as dead men." Why? Because the consciousness of sin paralyzes the strongest arm. If men were holy, the apparition of one from the unseen world would create no fear. In the women something of the same feeling was awakened, but it was soon dispelled by the voice of the angel, saying, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay."

It was fitting that an angel should be sent to announce an event of such transcendent importance, the corner-stone of the Christian church, and of the civilization of eighteen centuries.

THE ANGEL AT THE SEPULCHER.

THE JOURNEY TO EMMAUS.

LUKE XXIV., 13–32.

Opposers of the Christian system have often said that the resurrection of Christ was not an actual event, but a hope which gradually assumed the appearance of a fact. The conversation of the group in this picture shows how unfounded is the assumption that the disciples expected our Lord to rise again.

On the day when he rose two of his disciples were on the way to Emmaus, a village seven or eight miles north-west of Jerusalem, and engaged in earnest discourse about the events which had taken place. A stranger overtook them and inquired into the subject of their conversation. After a natural expression of surprise at his apparent ignorance, they spoke of Jesus as a prophet and of his condemnation and crucifixion, saying, "We trusted that it had been he which should redeem Israel; but, indeed, beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done." Then they added that certain women had been told by angels that Jesus was alive, and in fact they found his tomb empty, but him they saw not.

Then occurred what the illustration presents. The stranger, who was the Master, reproved them as (not "fools," but) dull of understanding and slow to believe what the prophets had spoken, and he expounded to them the Scriptures concerning himself, beginning at Moses and going through all the prophets. What a discourse that must have been! Imagination can conceive the outward scene as it is here set forth by the artist, but who of mortal men could reproduce the words of him who spake as never man spake? No wonder that the two afterward said, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

THE JOURNEY TO EMMAUS.

THE ASCENSION.

LUKE XXIV., 50–53.

HERE is portrayed the wondrous miracle by which our Lord concluded his sojourn on earth. He would not simply vanish from his disciples as he had done at times from his foes. He would show them, as far as it could be shown, that he returned from earth to heaven, that God took him to himself. His translation, therefore, was not like Enoch's, known only from the fact of his disappearance, nor was it like Elijah's, in a whirlwind with horses of fire and chariots of fire. On the contrary, having given his parting injunctions, the Master led his disciples to the Mount of Olives as far as Bethany, and there in broad day and in full view of all, he was taken up into heaven, and that in the act of pronouncing a blessing upon them.

The illustration gives the incident with great force and beauty. The Master's ascending form relieved against a clear sky, seems to float with ease as it is borne upward by an inherent power. The group below stand fixed in wonder and admiration, and continue to gaze long after a cloud has received him out of their sight.

"He is gone, and we remain
In this world of sin and pain:
In the void which he has left,
On this earth of him bereft.
We have still his work to do,
We can still his path pursue;
Seek him both in friend and foe,
In ourselves his image show."

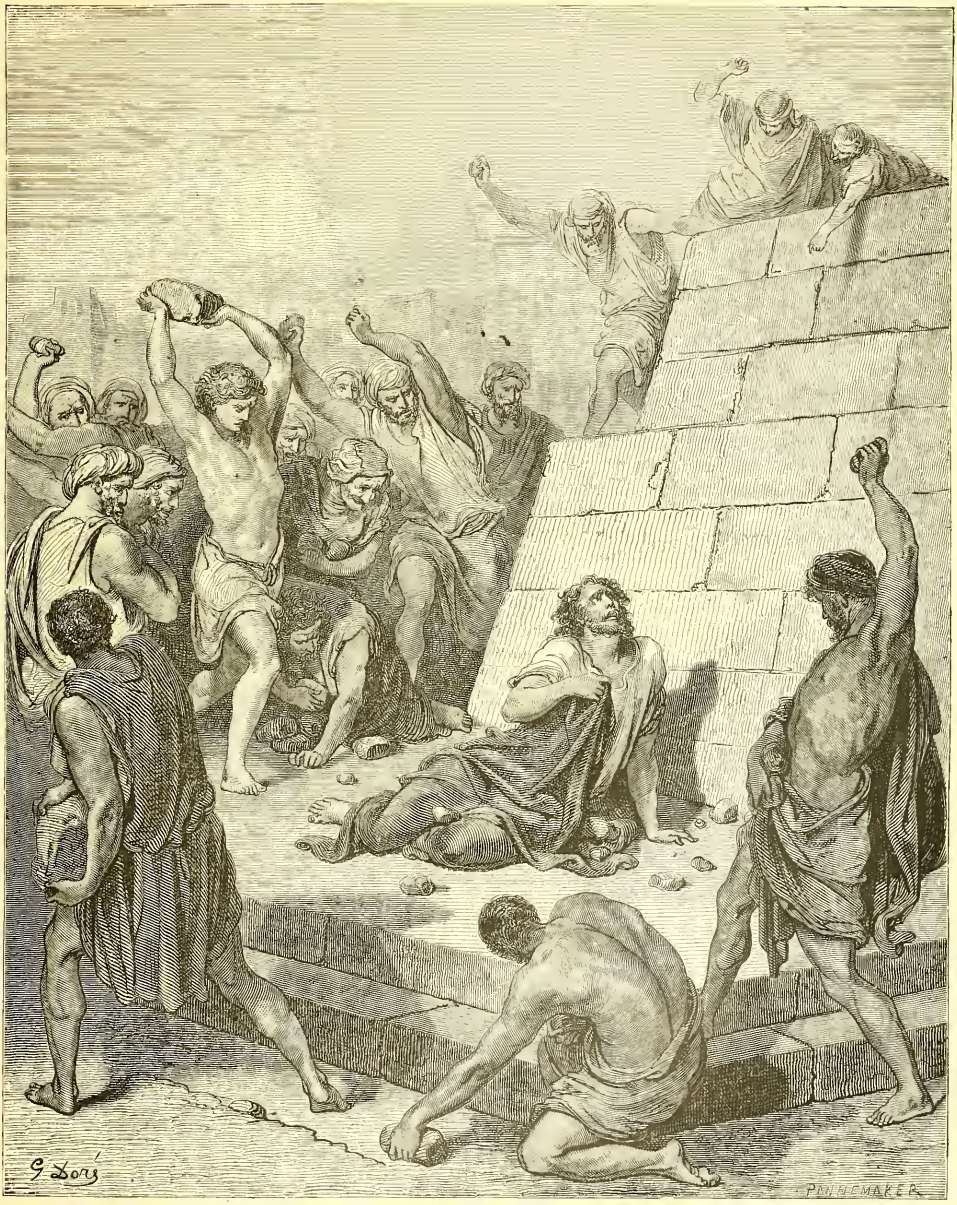
THE ASCENSION.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN.

ACTS VII., 54-60.

THE long list of bloody persecutions suffered by the Christian church begins with the name of Stephen. He was a foreign-born Jew who was early converted to the faith, and was chosen to be one of the first band of deacons. He is spoken of as "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and again as "full of grace and power," and doing great wonders among the people. His success excited the hostility of other Jews of foreign birth, who disputed with him, but were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. They, therefore, dragged him before the council on suborned charges of blaspheming Moses and God.

Here, put upon his defense, the holy man delivered an eloquent speech, reciting the main facts of Hebrew history, and showing the temporary nature of the ceremonial law and of the temple as a part of it, and then concluding with a terrible invective of the nation as rebellious and unfaithful from the beginning until now. His faithful utterance excited a burst of wrath, and with one accord his hearers rushed upon him and cast him out of the city and stoned him. This the picture represents with great animation, but the utterances of the dying martyr it does not and cannot convey. According to the inspired narrative, he called upon the Saviour, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and then again, with his last breath he cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,"—thus closely imitating the Saviour for whom he died, and furnishing a brilliant example for all those in after times who should be "slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held."



THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. STEPHEN.

SAUL'S CONVERSION.

ACTS IX.

The Apostle Paul was the youngest member of the apostolic college, or, as he describes himself, "one born out of due time." Yet he surpassed all the rest in the extent and usefulness of his labors in the Gospel. Such were his gifts natural and acquired, such were his zeal, energy, decision and courage, such his generosity, humility, faith and love, such his self-sacrifice and devotion, that all candid observers consider him one of the greatest spirits of all time. Appointed to do a work of unequaled importance, he fulfilled his course, and impressed himself, as no other man ever did, upon his contemporaries and upon all succeeding generations.

The starting point of his career, his conversion, is fully set forth in the Scripture. Although like all other conversions in its essential features, it was attended by very remarkable circumstances. The apostle had been an unwearied and unrelenting persecutor, sparing neither age nor sex in his fiery zeal. Having made havoc of the church in Jerusalem, he set out for Damascus to carry on his bloody work there, but he was strangely arrested on the way. Suddenly at noon there shone around him a light from heaven, a supernatural splendor which exceeded that of the meridian sun. This, as the illustration shows, struck him to the earth; and there he heard the voice, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Prostrated as he was with his companions, he yet distinguished the words spoken, and inquiring who it was that spoke, learned that it was Jesus of Nazareth. From that moment his unbelief departed never to return. It was some days before he received baptism, but the voice of the Lord wrought at once the total and irreversible change. He who had gone forth from Jerusalem "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples," entered Damascus an humbled, believing penitent.

SAUL'S CONVERSION.

THE DELIVERANCE OF ST. PETER.

ACTS XII., 3–19.

Of the impetuous Peter more is told us in the New Testament than of any other of the original twelve. Yet nothing in his previous history is so striking as the story of his rescue from the hands of the cruel and impious Herod. The king had slain the Apostle James, but he reserved Peter in prison, intending to bring him forth for execution after the Passover. To make sure of his victim he gave him in charge to four quaternions of soldiers, who were to relieve each other in guarding the prisoner. Two of each quaternion watched before the door, and the other two held Peter chained to their arms. But while they were watching, the church was praying; and the deliverance took place as shown in the illustration. One night Peter was roused from sleep by a bright light illumining the dungeon and the voice of an angel bidding him arise, while at the same moment the chains fell from his hands. Then the apostle, by direction, deliberately dressed himself and followed the angel, although it seemed to him as if the whole were a mere vision. The heavenly messenger led him straight through one ward after another till they came to the iron gate, which of its own accord opened before them, and then they found themselves at large in the city, whereupon the angel disappeared and Peter sought the society of his friends.

The illustration depicts the apostle led by the angel as he passes down the stone steps into the night dimly illumined by the moon, while the guards lie around stretched out in slumber. The form and countenance of Peter well express the vague astonishment he must have felt at his unexpected and miraculous deliverance.

THE DELIVERANCE OF ST. PETER.

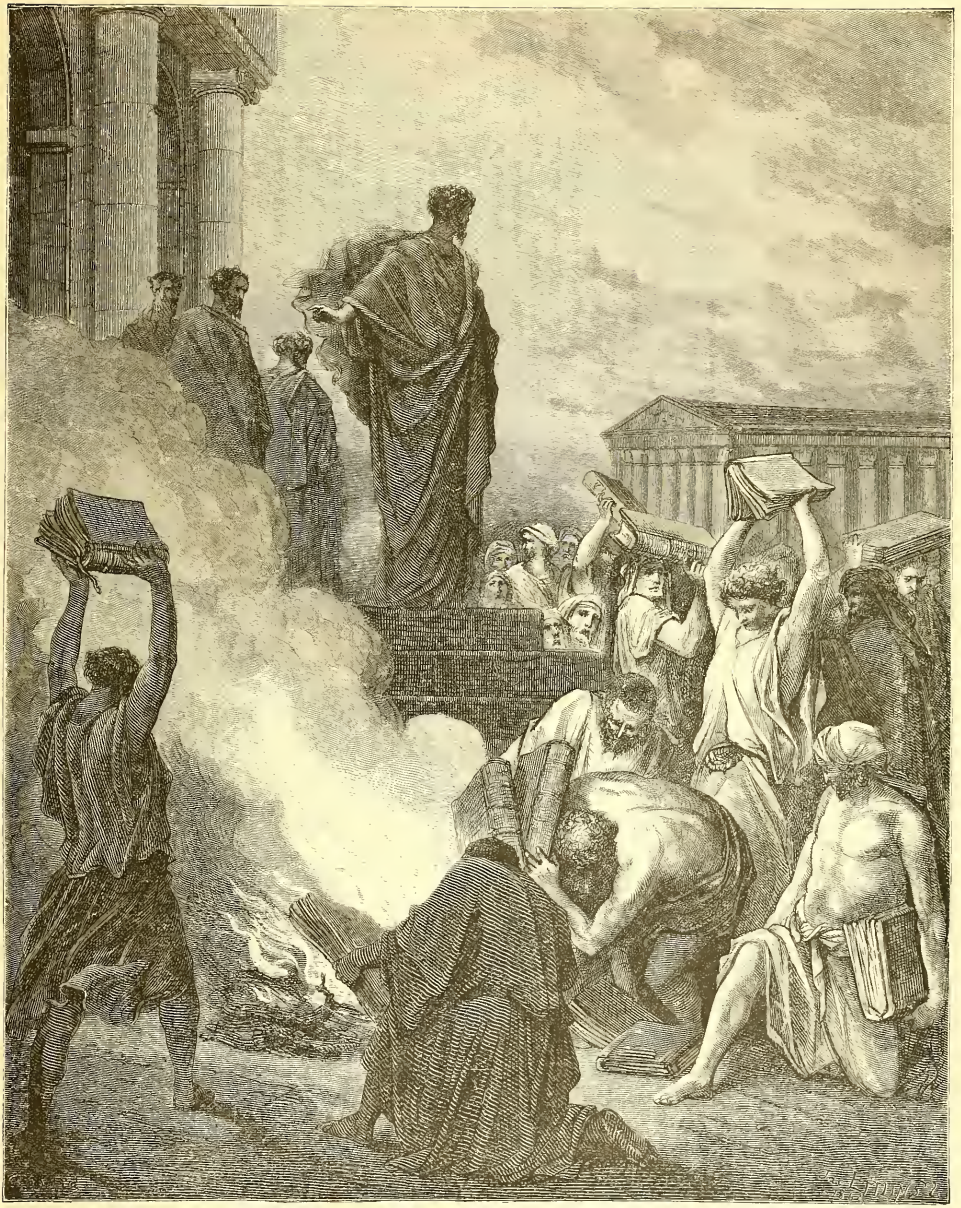
PAUL AT EPHESUS.

ACTS XIX., 17–20.

EPHESUS, the capital of the Roman province of Asia, was distinguished not only for its famous temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, but for its skill in all the magical or occult arts by which man proposes to lay open the secrets of nature and arm himself with supernatural powers. So far did this extend that "Ephesian letters" or "inscriptions" became proverbial as a designation of written charms, amulets and talismans. These were connected with the worship of Diana, on whose image certain mystical and unintelligible words are said to have been written and thence transferred to paper or parchment. Crœsus, King of Lydia, is said to have muttered some of these charms upon his funeral pile; and a story was told of a certain wrestler at Olympia who could not be overthrown until he was deprived of an Ephesian amulet about his ankle.

One of the effects of the preaching of the Gospel at Ephesus was to expose the true character of these false and deceitful arts. Many of the practitioners of magic and sorcery not only renounced their trade, but gave up its implements to destruction. They brought, we are told, "their books," including not only the charms and amulets, but the large rolls or volumes containing the rules and formulas of incantation. They showed their sincerity by burning these instead of selling them, as they might have done for a sum which in our currency would have amounted to many thousands of dollars—all books in ancient times being expensive, and especially such as contained secrets or charms held in high estimation.

The picture sets forth this triumph of principle in a life-like way. Men, one after another, are bringing their once prized volumes and casting them into the fire, while Paul stands above encouraging the sacrifice, and near by is the magnificent temple whose goddess gave the sanction to the magical rites.



PAUL AT EPHESUS.

PAUL MENACED BY THE JEWS.

ACTS XXI. 31–36.

THE illustration sets forth one of the first incidents of that imprisonment of the apostle which continued for years, and at last brought him to stand before Cæsar at Rome. He was in the temple, where he had a right to be, when suddenly some foreign-born Jews, more bitter even than the native Hebrews, raised a cry against him as one who opposed the law and was profaning the holy place by bringing Gentiles into it. The whole city was stirred; Paul was dragged out of the temple, and the tumultuous crowd were seeking to kill him. His life was in great danger, when the commander of the garrison, learning of the disturbance, hastened to the spot with soldiers and centurions. His presence made the mob stop beating Paul, but he could not learn the true state of the case, some crying one thing and some another. So he commanded the apostle to be conveyed into the castle, but when they came to the stairs such was the violent pressure of the maddened crowd that he had to be "borne of the soldiers."

It is this exciting scene which the picture portrays, presenting in broad contrast the chief captain at the top, the struggling apostle, the resolute soldiers and the confused mass of Jews pressing forward toward the object of their angry hate.

PAUL MENACED BY THE JEWS.

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK.

ACTS XXVII., 43, 44.

THE illustration represents the concluding scene of the apostle's last recorded voyage—that in which he was carried a prisoner to Rome. Luke's account of this remarkable voyage is characterized by a great fullness and exactness of nautical details, which the latest and most critical investigations have only served to render more surprising in themselves and more conclusive as internal evidences of authenticity and genuineness. For fourteen days the vessel was driven up and down the Adriatic Sea, most of the time without the light of either sun or stars. During this anxious period Paul, the prisoner, was the calmest man on board. He encouraged the passengers and crew, foretold that they would be cast away on a certain island, but declared that no life should be lost. And so it turned out. At last they ran the ship aground, and all escaped, some by plunging into the sea, others by trusting themselves to such spars or fragments as they could seize.

It is this point which the artist has chosen to depict. The helpless hulk lies in the distance, here and there a passenger is cast upon the shore, while Paul stands in the foreground with extended arm, as if recognizing the goodness of God in giving to him the lives of two hundred and seventy-six souls. Thrice before he had suffered shipwreck (II. Corin. xi., 25), and once had been a night and a day in the deep; but never had he had such an eventful experience, such a variety of dangers and such a wondrous deliverance in the end, as marked this voyage.

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK

DEATH ON THE PALE HORSE.

REVELATION VI., 8.

THE seals of the Apocalypse have been the subject of many and varied interpretations. but the tenor of this one, the fourth, scarcely admits of any doubt. What the seer saw was a pale horse, *i. e.*, one of pallid or livid color, the peculiar greenish hue which indicates the approach of dissolution. The rider was Death—not any particular form of death, such as war, pestilence, or famine, but the King of Terrors himself. No description is given of his person, nor does he appear with any emblem, as sword or spear or bow. Imagination has all possible scope to conceive the form of the destroyer as it will, and there is just that degree of obscurity which tends to sublimity. Attending him is Hell (or rather *Hades*, the abode of the dead), ready to gather up the slain—that personified abyss which enlargeth itself and openeth its mouth without measure; and men's glory and their multitude and their pomp descend into it (Isaiah v., 14).

This striking symbol has often employed the pencil of the artist. M. Doré has done it justice. The piece is full of action. Amid the shades of night we see the headlong horse with terrible nostrils and neck clothed with thunder, the fierce rider with his resistless scythe, and behind, the array of demoniac figures rushing eagerly on their prey.

DEATH ON THE PALE HORSE.